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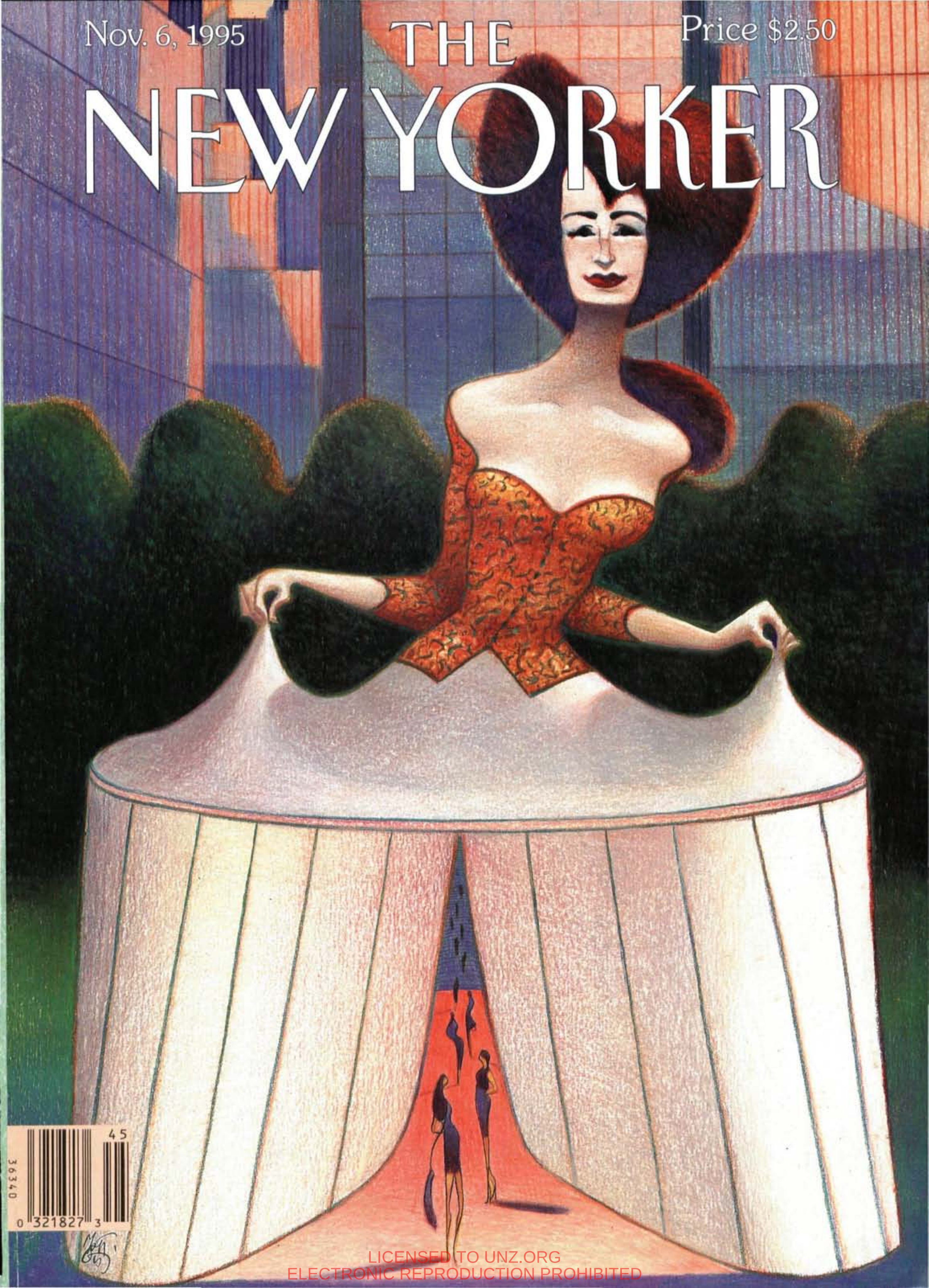

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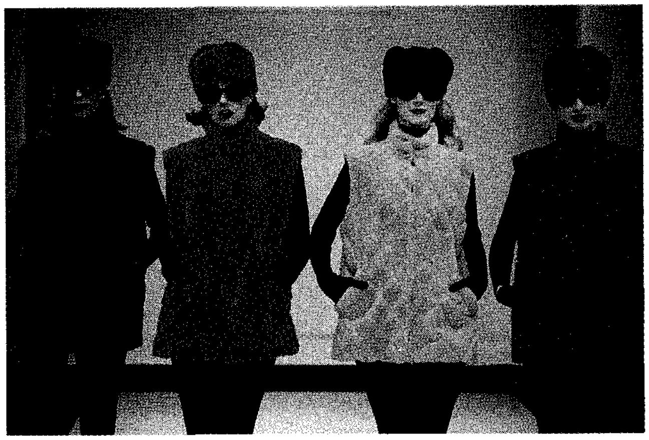
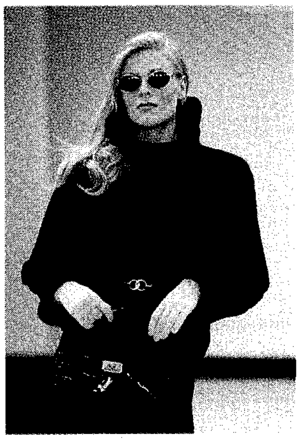

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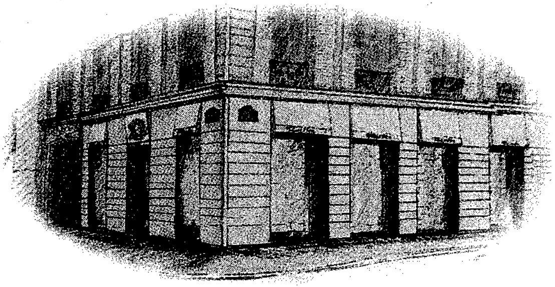

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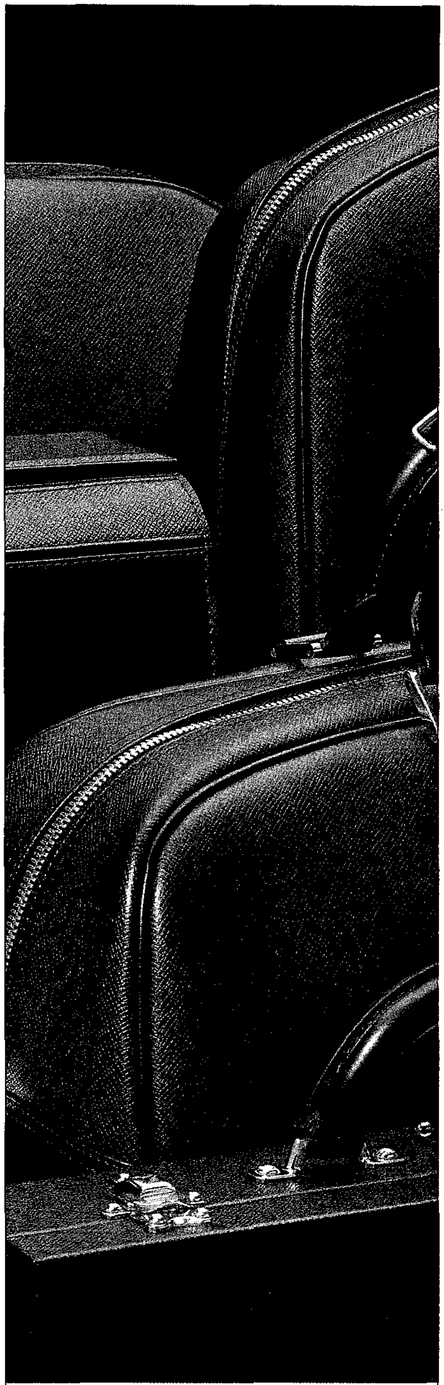

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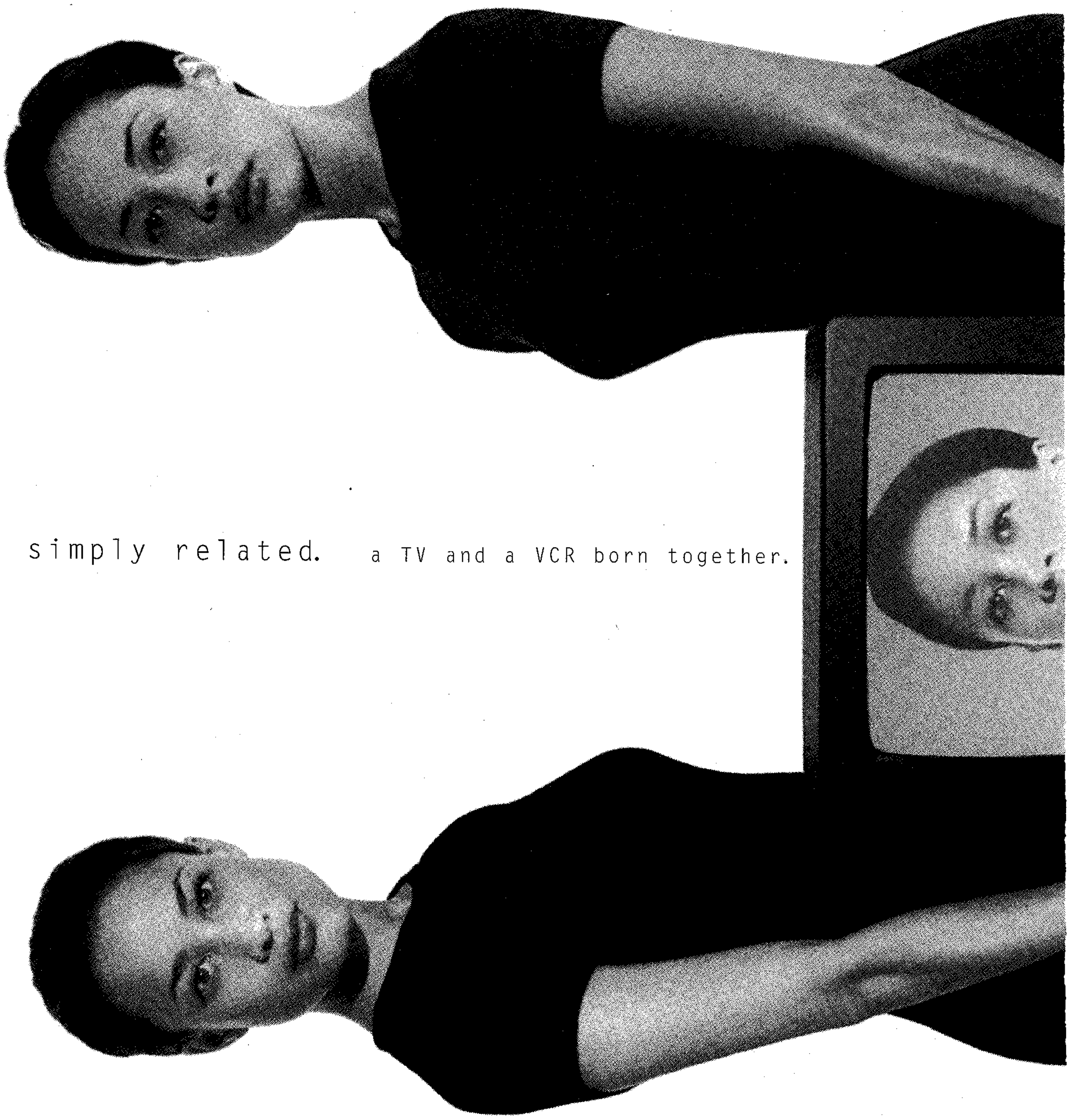
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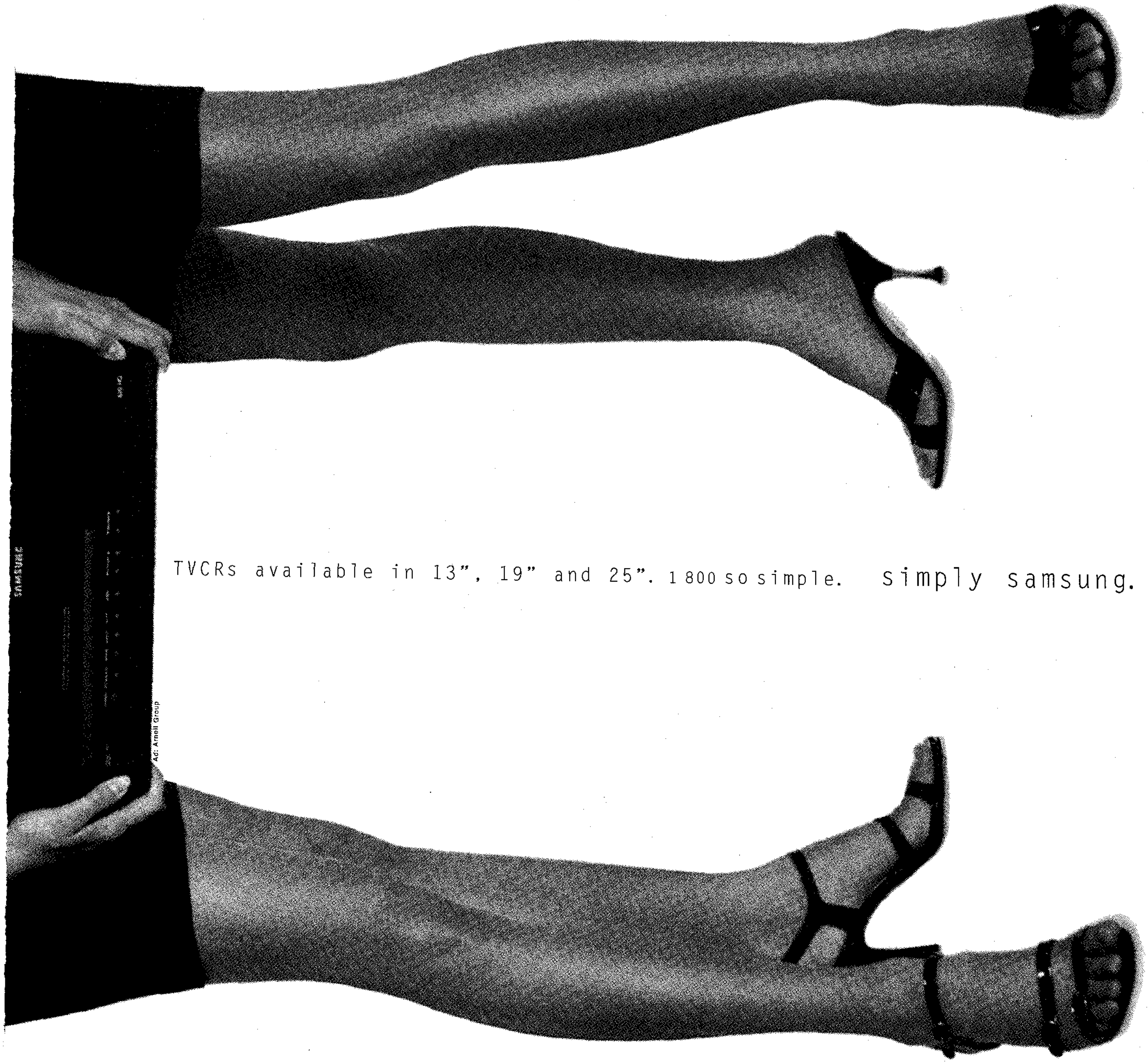
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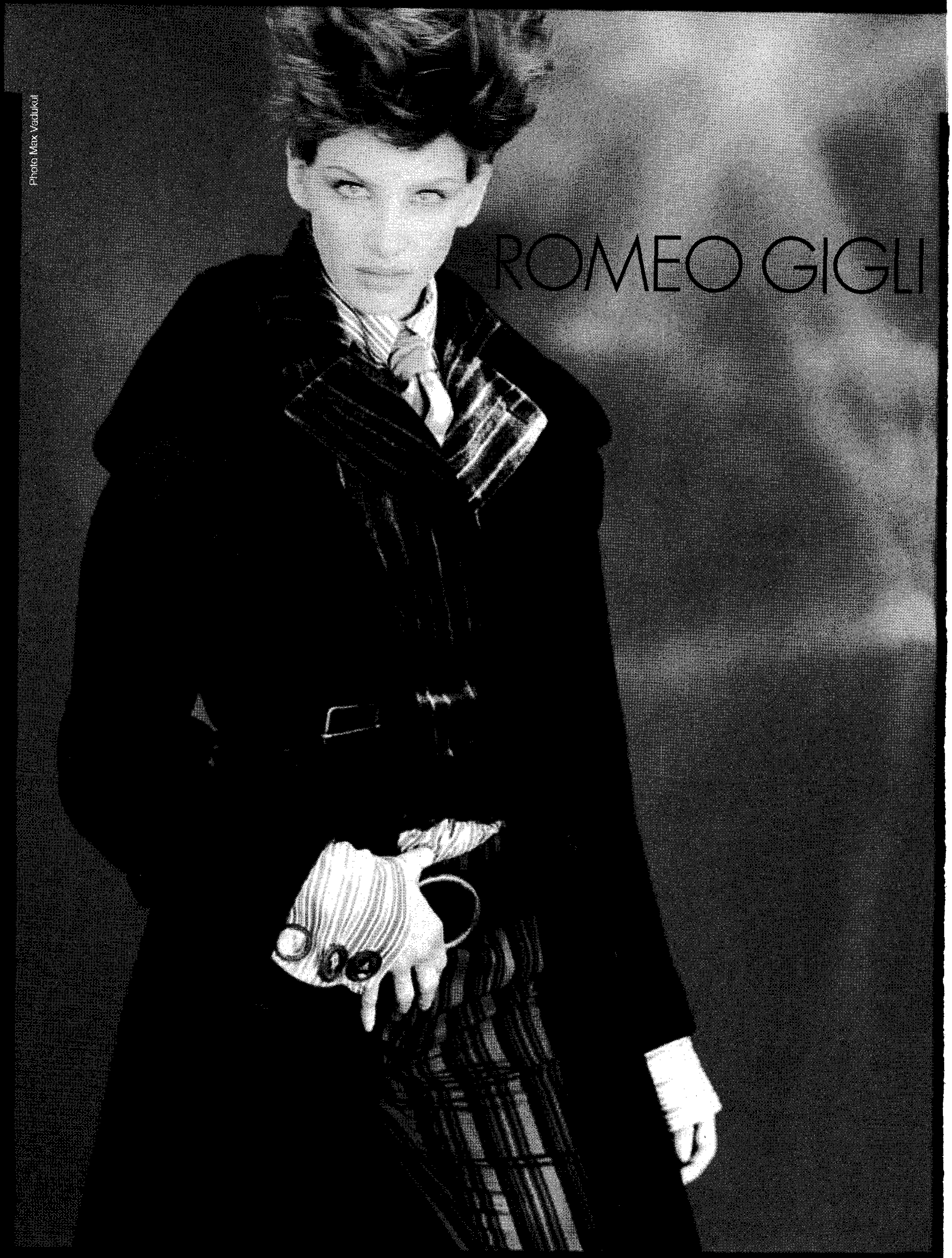
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COMMENT

GEEK SHOWS

What's on? People with nothing on.

In current parlance, a "geek" is practically any young male wearing tape on his eyeglasses and a pocket protector. But when the word first entered the American vocabulary, during the twenties, it referred to something much weirder. A geek was a sideshow or carnival performer who distinguished himself by his willingness to commit the most loathsome and humiliating acts onstage—commonly, biting the head off a live chicken. The geek's sideshow colleagues, the "freaks," typically regarded him as outside the pale. They, after all, had been reduced to their spectacular status by terrible accidents of birth, whereas the geek's calamity was entirely voluntary. What had gone out of kilter in him was not a hormone or a chromosome, as in the case of the bearded lady or the midget, but the capacity for shame.

The geek, it seems, is always with us, and so is the travelling sideshow, although it now arrives in every American hamlet and metropolis daily, in hour-long segments, with barkers named Ricki Lake and Sally Jessy Raphaël and Jerry Springer and Carnie and Rolonda and Maury and Tempestt. The new trash talk shows are the unholy offspring of Marshall McLuhan and Andy Warhol: every weekday, the idle and the curious among us are ushered into a carnival of prurience, there to watch our own paltry sins and desires blasted into insignificance by a parade of infamies more wondrous than our nightmares. The effect is decadent, sickly, and sometimes almost hallucinatory. These shows are like giant Dumpsters from which tumble half-digested scraps of a thousand other cultural rituals: the televised courtroom, the advice-to-the-lovelorn column, the TV problem drama, the TV game show, and various degraded gladiatorial spectacles, from cockfights to professional wrestling. There is even a strong ecclesiastical flavor to the proceedings: we are taking part in confession and self-sacrifice, through surrogates who present themselves on the altar to undergo public chastisement for our edification. The tent-show geeks of old used to provide a species of expiation: whatever abominations we had committed were as nothing compared with the public mastication of clucking poultry. And so it is with the talk shows. We may lust in our hearts, but

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GORE VIDAL

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RANDOM HOUSE

we have never slept with our half brother's lesbian pre-op stepmother (or whatever: the subjects of these shows defy parody). And, even if we have, we are not such fallen creatures as to bray about our errors to an audience of millions.

Except, increasingly, we are. What makes the new geek shows all the more unsettling is the American yearning for celebrity of any sort, at any cost. Celebrity has become a kind of currency: it will not buy food or shelter, but it will supply, however temporarily, respect, sexual attention, a taste of the limo life, and other commodities whose consumption may lighten the burden of genuine economic hardship. Talk-show guests aren't paid; they don't have to be. They long to be geeks. As they come onstage, the same sort of applause and clamorous music greets them that greets the movie stars and sports heroes on the "Tonight Show" and "Late Show with David Letterman." And, as the transvestites and philanderers tell off the audience, proclaiming their truths and defending their iniquity, a creepy ecstasy often seizes them. You can see it: the look on their faces is that of one who, having delivered his speech to the world a thousand times in front of the mirror, now finds the fantasy coming true. I slept with her because I didn't know she was thirteen. I strip because I'm proud of my body. I'm changing my sex because I want to be accepted for who I am. Hey, I'm the victim here. Don't tell me you wouldn't do the same thing.

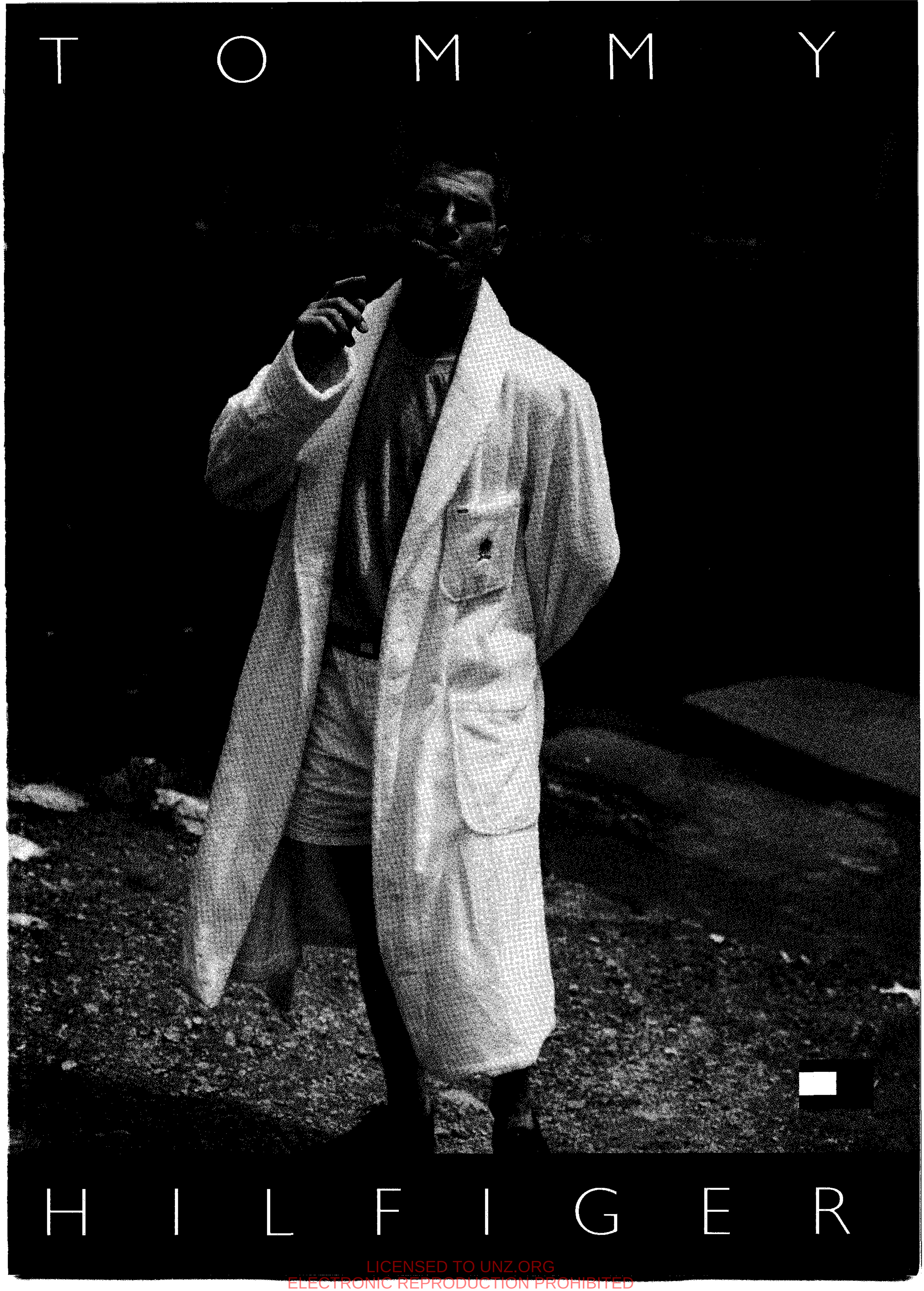
Last Thursday, Senator Joseph Lieberman, a Democrat from Connecticut, and William Bennett, the Republicans' shadow Secretary of Virtue, held a press conference to denounce the "lurid" daytime talk shows, to expound on their dangers, and to deplore their effects on children. This development was probably inevitable: Bennett's sensitive nostrils always begin fibrillating when the smell of decadence taints American air. Claiming success (somewhat dubiously) in their "campaign against violently obscene music lyrics," Bennett and Lieberman are now, according to their press release, "petitioning producers to acknowledge their responsibilities toward their viewers, both children and the general public, rather than just the profits they may stand to gain from them." The press release adds, "Dr. Bennett and Senator Lieberman are not calling for content censorship. . . ." Nor are they calling for boycotts. And these are reasonable stances, since censorship is politically unfeasible and boycotting sponsors can't succeed with syndicated shows, which have hundreds of different sponsors in hundreds of different markets—far too many to organize a boycott around.

But does any of this matter? Daytime talk shows are indisputably an embarrassment, but are they actually doing anyone any harm? If these shows display degradation, that is not quite tantamount to celebrating it. In fact, Sally Jessy, Montel, Rolonda, and all the others often strike a mildly moralistic pose. And the barbaric yawp coming from the studio audience is the sound of a latter-day Greek chorus, representing the viewers at home: when a microphone is thrust in an audience member's face, he or she is likely to utter something wholesome and commonsensical, and to be applauded exuberantly for it. True, the shameless self-display on the screen and the shameless voyeurism in the audience (including those of us who watch from the couch) make a nauseating combination, but the disgust that politicians express at all this is often difficult to distinguish from class disgust—in other words, from thinly camouflaged snobbery. The guests on trash TV are preponderantly from the lower orders; their fraught romances are often interracial, and the spectacle of so many unfamiliar gestures, hairstyles, fashions, and bits of jargon may shock politicians whose previous contact with people like these has come from statistical samples and made-for-TV movies. In the light of the anti-welfare legislation and the draconian budget-cutting measures that have recently been shoved through Congress, an observer might well wonder at the wisdom of this latest initiative: first they take away the bread; now they're coming after the circuses.

Attempts to control the culture from above are generally a bad idea. Repress an appetite here and it will pop up over there, often in a hardier, more repugnant form. Besides, extreme TV has historically tended to wither and die all by itself. (Remember the wailing and posturing over Morton Downey, Jr.?) The audience simply gets bored; the fickle finger of favor moves on. In the years before the Second World War, the sideshow geek was gradually replaced by more appealing mass entertainments—movies, for example. Similarly, the demise of sordid talk shows will occur the moment someone comes up with a more enticing alternative to soap operas and game shows—the other staples of daytime broadcasting. Trash TV is one instance in which the unfettered free market so beloved of Dr. Bennett's political comrades-in-arms will probably accomplish his ends all by itself. And then it will be interesting to see whether he and Senator Lieberman claim credit for yet another blow against the forces of cultural entropy.—STEPHEN SCHIFF

Victoria Roberts

"It's the peacock-removal guy."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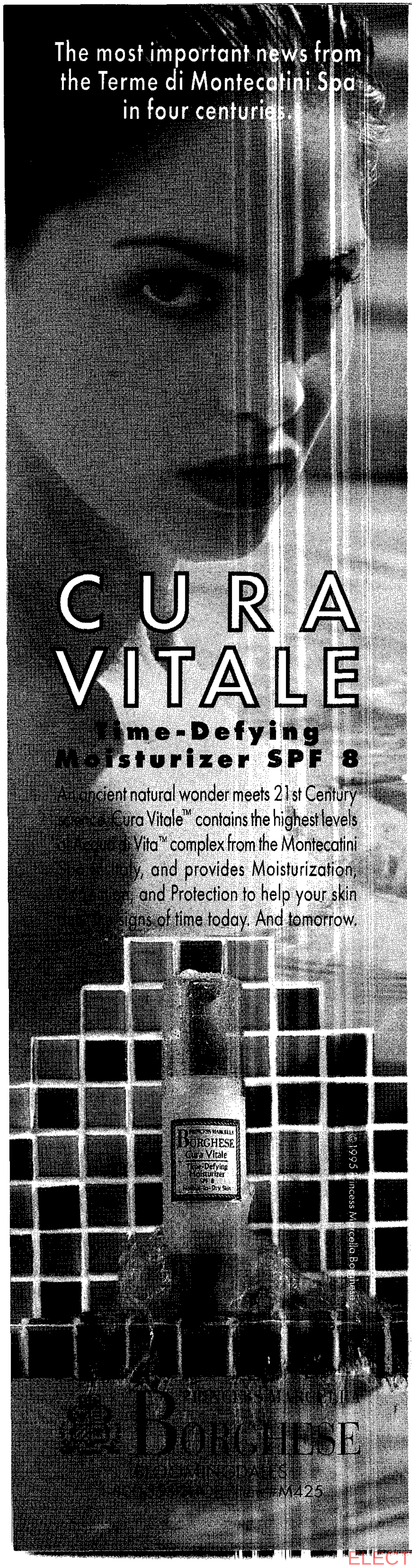

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IN THE MAIL

SELECTED MEMORIES

In the excerpt from his memoirs which ran in your issue of October 2nd ("How I Survived the Fifties") Gore Vidal remembers the Trillings. In my recent memoir, "The Beginning of the Journey," I don't remember Gore Vidal, nor can I suppose that Lionel Trilling would have thought to mention him if he had lived to write the memoir which he was projecting at the time of his death. This is because we scarcely knew him.

In my long life, I have met Gore Vidal twice: once, as he reports, when Fred Dupee, whom we were visiting for the weekend, took us to Mr. Vidal's house on the Hudson; the second and last time, when we were visiting the widow of Andrew Cohen in London and Mr. Vidal dropped in after dinner. Yet Mr. Vidal writes of me, "*For many years* [italics mine], whenever I would ring Fred, I'd say in a thundering bass voice, 'Fred! This is *Diana*. Diana *Trilling*.' " Surely it is extraordinary that on the basis of two such passing encounters I should remain this central a figure in Mr. Vidal's imagination.

As a matter of fact, I had a forecast of his strange concern with me a few years ago when he wrote an article about Dawn Powell in the *New York Review of Books*, in which he went out of his way to call me to account for my failure to appreciate Miss Powell's comic gifts. He was mistaken. As I was able to reply to that gratuitous introduction of my name into his discussion of Miss Powell, in my job as fiction critic of *The Nation*—my "book chat for *The Nation*," as he likes to call it—I wrote at considerable length in praise of Dawn Powell.

I doubt the truth of Gore Vidal's report, now, of how Fred Dupee responded to Vidal's play with my name. Fred and I were friends for many years. I had affection and admiration for him. In what Vidal describes as my "inadvertently hilarious" piece about Allen Ginsberg's poetry reading at Columbia, "The Other Night at Columbia," I wrote of him with greatest respect. Fred is now dead and we have no way to prove or disprove Mr. Vidal's attribution to him of malice toward me. Without this evidence, I prefer to stay with my own sense of Fred's friendship and loyalty.

As to Mr. Vidal's report of Saul Bellow's greeting to my husband on the occasion of our visit—"Still peddling the same old horseshit?"—Bellow is still alive to confirm or reject this quotation. He was not always friendly to Lionel but, to my knowledge, this is not his style in antagonism or controversy. I have no recollection of such a remark, nor is it the kind of greeting that Lionel would have countenanced.

My personal response to Mr. Vidal aside, there remains the much more important matter of why intellectuals behave as Mr. Vidal is behaving. Mr. Vidal likes to locate himself among our more serious writers, the ones whose work is intended to bear most closely upon the moral life of our country. In assessing their contribution to our national culture, what, I must wonder, are we to do with this personal vulgarity and ugliness? Is it entirely to be written off, ignored? Can it be? I raise this question, but I do not have the answer.

DIANA TRILLING
New York City

Reading "How I Survived the Fifties," I was reminded of the first time I heard Gore Vidal's name. I remember it vividly, because it came at a significant moment in my life. I was in a freshman political-science class at Stephen F. Austin State University, in my home town of Nacogdoches, Texas. The

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course was taught by a self-described Communist, who on the first day of class walked into the room and interrupted our student babble with two questions: "Who would have been the best President this country ever had?" and "Why was he kept from being a viable candidate?" The answers were: "Gore Vidal" and "Because he was a homosexual."

Because I was struggling with coming out as a young gay man and with the knowledge that I was indeed different from most of my classmates, Gore Vidal's name filled a gap in my consciousness, which had been searching for a metaphor to describe my difference. That name came to represent everything my milieu was not. A world that I had hoped was out there was revealed and named. My associations with Mr. Vidal's name helped propel me out and away from home and toward my future as a university professor and an out gay man. I can only hope that this opening up and propelling away might be what the Commie prof (and Mr. Vidal) intended.

CARLOS L. DEWS
Pensacola, Fla.

Gore Vidal remembers an impressive number of glamorous American and European icons, only to rummage through their dirty underwear. In contrast, the photographs that illustrate Vidal's bitchy text show Gore in front of his white-columned bungalow and a very young, very tanned Gore with Tennessee Williams and J.F.K. No pockmarks on Gore's face.

Vidal's description here of the details of the people he says he hung around with demonstrates the workings of a puritanical mind rather than the mind of the pagan that Vidal believes he is. But Vidal is right about one thing: beyond its text, an article gives the reader the essence of the absent author—and Vidal is a white-gloved sightseer who makes sideshows out of other people's lives.

ELLEN ALLANIC
Concord, Calif.

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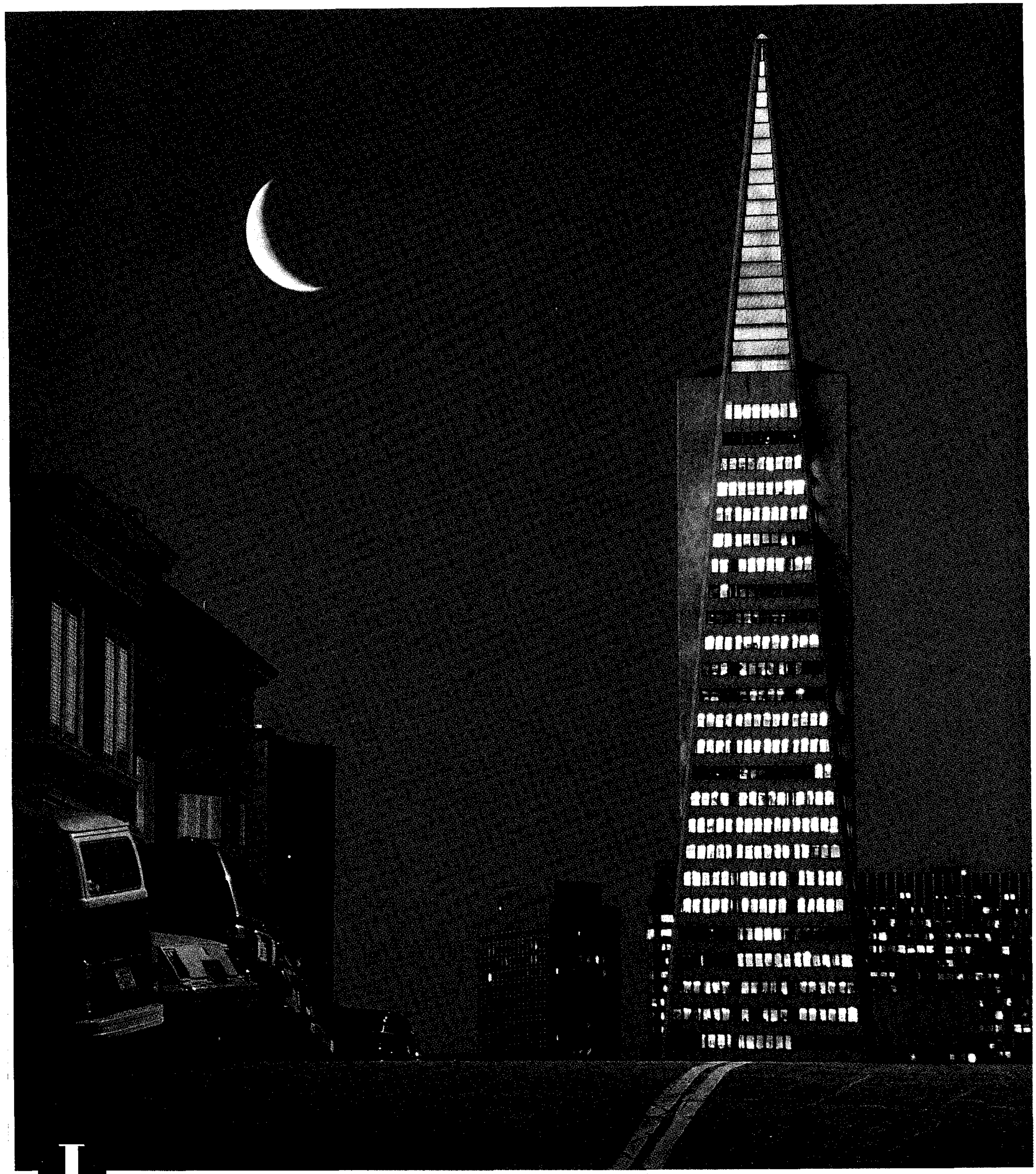

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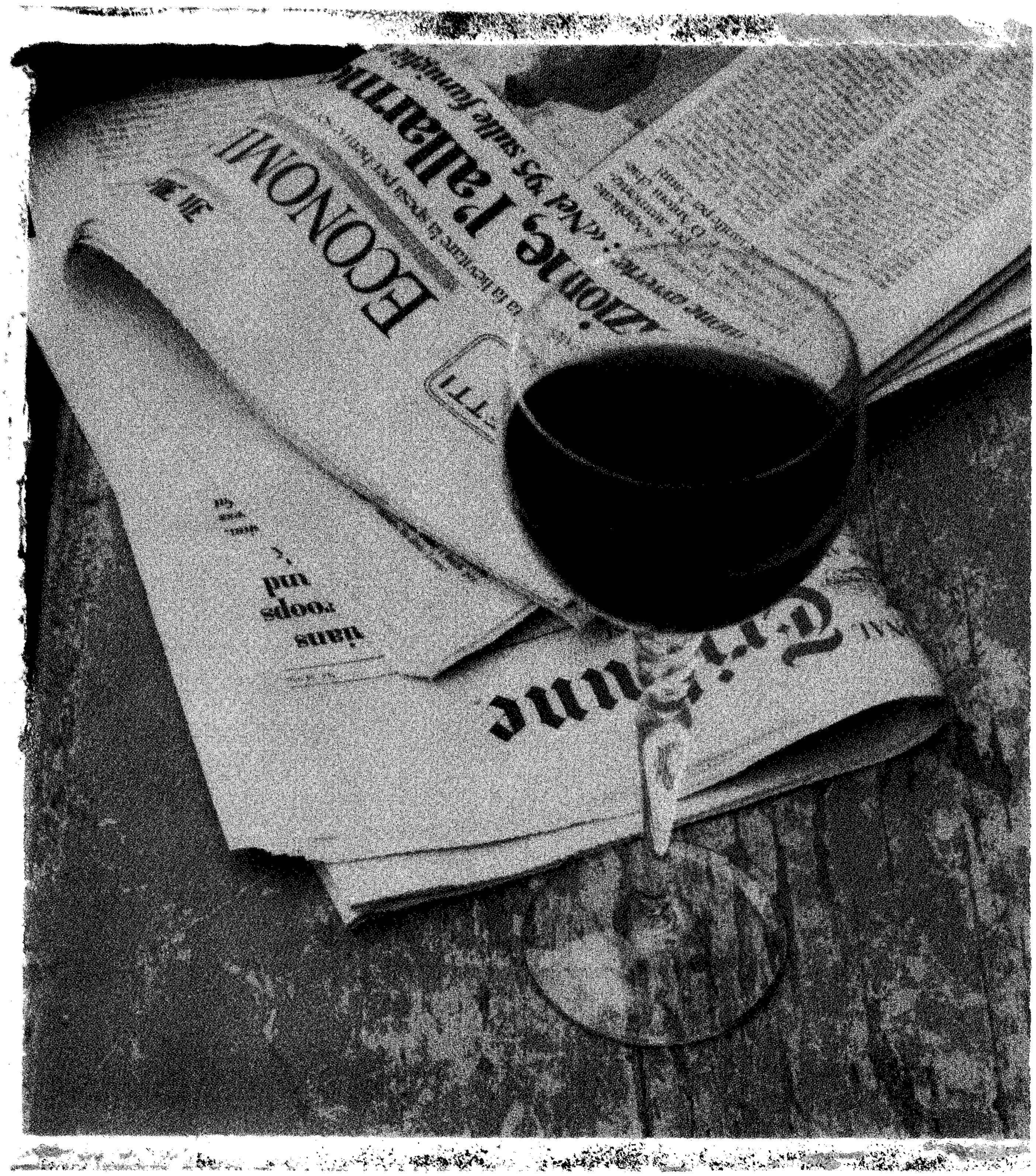

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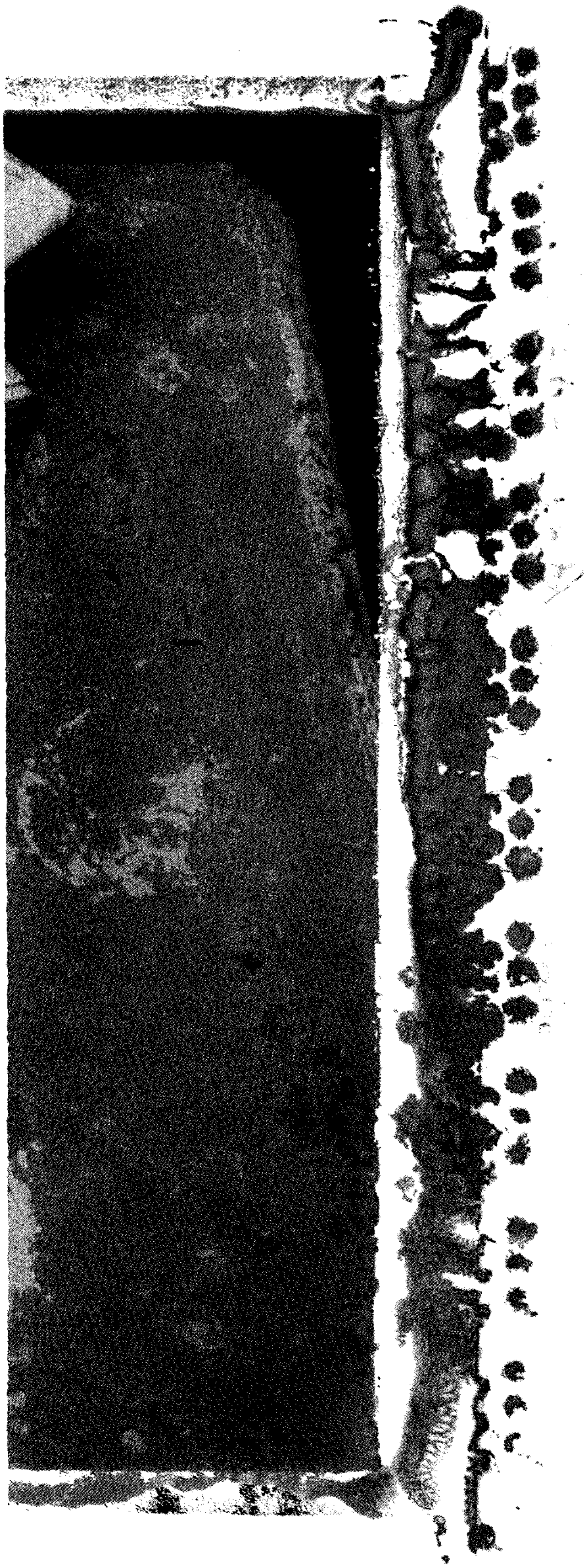

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THE THEATRE

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

All About Jeez; or, The Sacred Squirt—The latest chapter in Assurbanipal Babilla's epic satire, "Babylonian Babies," incorporates dance, shadow puppetry, and readings from his "New and Improved Testament," and features a cast of seven (including Babilla) and a chorus of twenty as various Biblical figures. Preview on Nov. 2. Opens Nov. 3 at 10 and continues, Thursdays through Saturdays, through Nov. 18. (La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710.)

Antigone—The Pearl Theatre Company presents Sophocles' tragedy. In previews through Nov. 4. Opens Nov. 5 at 2. (80 St. Mark's Pl. 598-9802.)

Bring In 'Da Noise, Bring In 'Da Funk: A Tap/Rap Discourse on the Staying Power of the Beat—A new musical by tap virtuoso Savion Glover, spoken-word artist Reg E. Gaines, and director George C. Wolfe, which stars Glover and Gaines, accompanied by a troupe of tappers, three bucket drummers, and the music of singer Ann Duquesnay and composers Zane Mark and Daryl Waters. Previews begin Nov. 3. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 260-2400.)

Cuba Libre—Three Cuban stars—singers Meme Solis and Annia Linares and dancer Sonia Calero—appearing together for the first time perform a retrospective revue of their careers along with new material. In previews through Nov. 4. Opens Nov. 5 at 3. (INTAR, 420 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

Danny Gans on Broadway—The comic and singer with a repertoire of more than two hundred impersonations makes his Broadway début. In previews. (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100.)

Double Identity—The Folksbiene Playhouse presents a new Yiddish musical, based on Sholom Aleichem's comedy "Hard to Be a Jew." Ino Toper and Zypora Spaisman lead the cast. Simultaneous translations in English and in Russian will be available. In previews. (123 E. 55th St. 755-2231.)

Love in the Void (alt.fan.c-love)—An encore engagement of Elyse Singer's multimedia adaptation of the rock star Courtney Love's 1994 Internet dialogue. With Carolyn Baeumler as Love. Nov. 1-4 at 8. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., at Spring St. 647-0202.)

Master Class—Zoe Caldwell is Maria Callas in Terrence McNally's examination of the diva as teacher. Leonard Foglia is the director. In previews through Nov. 4. Opens Nov. 5 at 6:45. (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Monogamist—A poet discovers that his wife is having an affair with one of her students, in Christopher Kyle's satirical comedy. Directed by Scott Elliott. In previews. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

New England—A dark comedy by Richard Nelson, about a family of English transplants at odds with America. Directed by Howard Davies. In previews through Nov. 6. Opens Nov. 7 at 6:45. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

Old, Wicked Songs—An impassive American pianist living in Vienna in 1986 undergoes a spiritual awakening with the help of an elderly Austrian professor and the music of Schumann. Presented by the Jewish Repertory Theatre. In previews through Nov. 4. Opens Nov. 5 at 7. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000.)

Quills—A new drama by Doug Wright, in which the Marquis de Sade outsmarts the would-be censors who run the insane asylum to which he has been committed. Directed by Howard Shalwitz. Previews begin Nov. 3. (New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. 460-5475.)

Racing Demon—In David Hare's play, a group of clergymen confronts the problems of operating a mission in inner-city London. Directed by Richard Eyre. In previews. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

DUPUY-BERBERIAN

Tim Hopper and Mark Nelson, in "Picasso at the Lapin Agile."

Riff Raff—Laurence Fishburne makes his playwriting and directorial début and stars in this drama, set during the twenty-four hours following a drug robbery, which examines the relationships between an ex-con, his ex-partner, and a junkie. Opens Nov. 1 at 8. (Circle Repertory Company, 159 Bleecker St. 239-6200.)

Sacrilege—Ellen Burstyn, Giancarlo Esposito, and Herb Foster star in a new play by Diane Shaffer, about a Manhattan nun who wants to become a priest. Two previews on Nov. 1. Opens Nov. 2 at 6:45. (Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Splendora—From Sag Harbor's Bay Street Theatre, where it premièred in July, a musical directed by Jack Hofsiss and choreographed by Robert LaFosse, about a man who returns home with an enigmatic woman and an urge to delve into his past. Book by Peter Webb, based on Edward Swift's 1978 novel. Previews begin Nov. 1. (American Place Theatre, 111 W. 46th St. 239-6200.)

The Tempest—The New York Shakespeare Festival's Central Park production, starring Patrick Stewart and directed by George C. Wolfe, moves indoors for a twelve-week run. Preview on Nov. 1. Opens that evening at 8. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

The Warm-Up—Martin Landau directs Sammy Shore's one-man comedy (based on his 1984 autobiography of the same title) about Shore's career as the opening act for such stars as Elvis Presley, Frank Sinatra, and Sammy Davis, Jr. Previews begin Nov. 4. (American Jewish Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. 633-9797.)

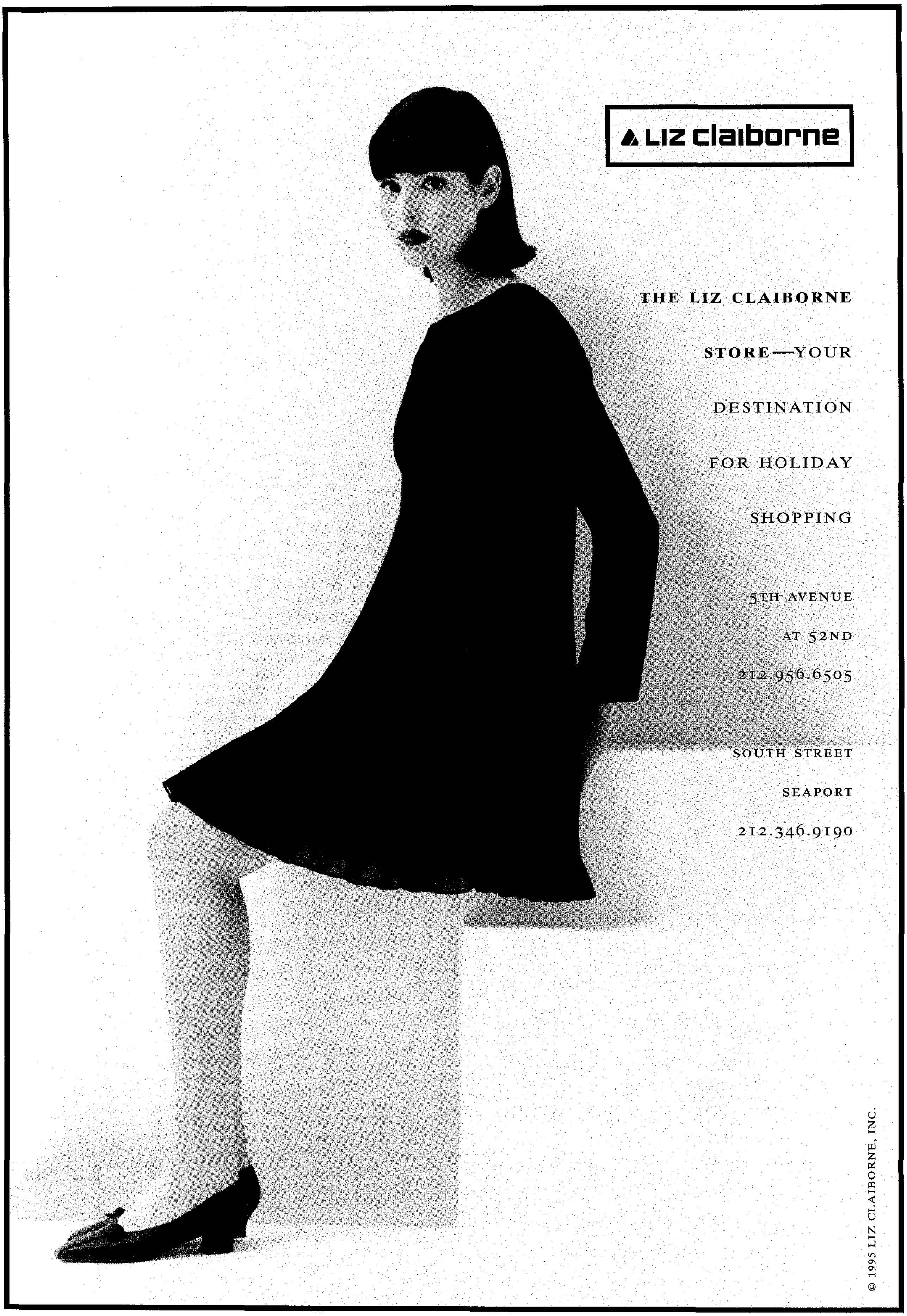
OPENED RECENTLY

Chris Durang & Dawne—You may know Christopher Durang as a talented, wildly funny playwright, but that's only part of the story—he's also a talented, wildly funny performer, and here, with Sherry Anderson and John Augustine as his partners in musical crime, he roasts musical chestnuts as well as some of the more ridiculous songs that have floated to the top of the charts. Durang claims that the trio has been busy touring Ramada Inns ("It's been horrible . . . but fun"); their well-honed, majestically second-rate song stylings include a version of "I Want Your Sex" that segues into "Sixteen Going On Seventeen," and a blissfully bad rendition of "Liza with a 'Z.'" (The Triad, 158 W. 72nd St. 799-4599. Closes Nov. 11.)

Company—The god of casting doesn't shine on the Roundabout Theatre Company's revival of Stephen Sondheim and George Furth's 1970 musical, but nothing can dim the brilliance of a score whose themes of fear, loneliness, and anxiety in relationships have become more urgent as the battle between the sexes has intensified. In the show's best-written scene, Veanne Cox, as a would-be bride, knocks the audience dead when she crawls across the floor, pale and bug-eyed, and sings "Getting Married Today." Directed by Scott Ellis. (Reviewed in our issue of 10/23/95.) (Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

Crocodiles in the Potomac—Wendy Belden's Washington comedy is principally about the effect of the Watergate hearings on the lives of four people, but it's also about friendship, dysfunctional families, drug and alcohol dependency, and modern Greek politics—a lot of ground to cover in an hour and three-quarters. The dialogue is, for the most part, compelling and clever, and the ensemble cast works well together, but the disparate themes don't resonate beyond the theatre doors. (Theatre Row

DUPUY-BERBERIAN



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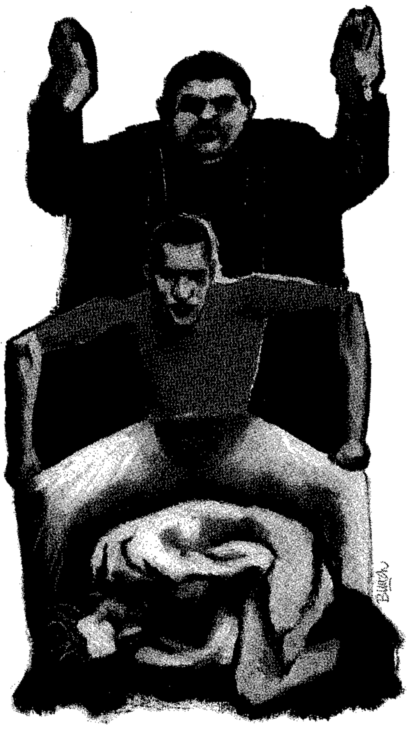
Theatre, 424 W. 42nd St. 765-1706. Closes Nov. 12.)

Dangerous Corner—J. B. Priestley's 1932 mystery—in which a gathering turns ugly when a group of dinner guests cross over the line of proper party talk—is a meditation on the fragile interconnectedness of people's lives. But as directed by David Mamet, the characters don't seem connected at all. Most mysteries move with snap; Mamet has given this one a depressed pace that allows you to guess the worst before it is, inevitably, revealed. The real mystery is why everyone onstage seems so strangely wooden. (Atlantic, 336 W. 20th St. 239-6200.)

The Food Chain—In Nicky Silver's new play, the paths of five New Yorkers cross, hilariously. The situations are familiar and sitcom-ish, but the writing is tangy and memorably funny, and the actors—especially Hope Davis, as a dithery poet, and Phyllis Newman, as a long-suffering Jewish matron whose idea of listening is to talk—give smart, wonderfully fresh performances. Robert Falls directed. (9/11/95) (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

Fool Moon—Clowning and music with Bill Irwin, David Shiner, and North Carolina's Red Clay Ramblers, who have returned to Broadway with their 1993 show. (Ambassador, 215 W. 49th St. 239-6200.)



Heavy D, Laurence Fishburne, and Titus Welliver, in "Riff Raff."

BLITCH

Full Gallop—Just when you thought you'd seen enough one-person shows to last you the rest of the decade, along comes Mary Louise Wilson with her vibrant and unexpectedly touching portrayal of Diana Vreeland, whose will and imagination were let loose for several decades at *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue*. Wilson, who co-wrote the script with Mark Hampton, re-creates the dash, verve, and inspired vulgarity with which D.V. went at the world. "Delightful, delicious, *divine*!" Directed by Nicholas Martin. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

Garden District—These two Tennessee Williams one-acts, which were originally presented together in 1958, are both set in New Orleans in the thirties, and they go well together, at least in theory: one is about the delusion of power, the other about the power of delusion. But the productions are sorely lacking in chemistry, and the evening is an arduous one. Myra Carter, as a controlling old woman in "Something Unspoken," is sly and pathetic, and always highly watchable, but she and Pamela Payton-Wright, who plays her longtime secretary, create no tension. And the thrashing about of Elizabeth Ashley and Jordan Baker in "Suddenly Last Summer" never succeeds in bringing the play to life. Theodore Mann and Harold Scott directed. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Closes Nov. 5.)

Hello, Dolly!—Carol Channing reprises the role of Dolly Levi, the matchmaker in pursuit of a millionaire, which she created in the 1963 musical. Lee Roy Reams directs. (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying—In this revival of Frank Loesser's 1961 musical, Matthew Broderick has polish and timing, but it's Lillias White's gospel solo in "Brotherhood of Man" that lifts the audience into a zone of joy. (4/24/95) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

Indiscretions—This production of Jean Cocteau's "Les Parents Terribles," a dark comedy about the perversities of desire in family life, is marred by Kathleen Turner's unfocussed performance as a hysterically possessive mother. Roger Rees, Dana Ivey, Cynthia Nixon, and Jude Law also star, under the direction of Sean Mathias. (5/15/95) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

Jean Cocteau Repertory—Presenting "Nathan the Wise," Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's 1779 drama, in repertory with a solid production of Beckett's "Waiting for Godot." (Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. 677-0060.)

The Memorandum—Václav Havel's scathing 1966 play, an indictment of bureaucracy and its abuses, in a rousing production by the Independent Theatre Company. The office-from-hell at the play's core, rife with conspiracies and betrayals, is well served by a white labyrinthine set, where the actors pace like trapped animals. Though the acting shades, at times, into histrionics, there are strong performances by Mary Coburn as a villainous technocrat, Seth Rosmarin as her henchman, and Aviva Stei as a secretary who is interested only in her next meal. Michelle Gigante directs. (House of Candles Theatre, 99 Stanton St. 353-3088.)

Mrs. Klein—Uta Hagen stars in a suspense drama by Nicholas Wright, about the death, in 1934, of psychoanalyst Melanie Klein's son. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200.)

The Model Apartment—In Donald Margulies' play, a German-Jewish couple retire from Brooklyn to Florida and are followed not only by their crippling concentration-camp memories but also by their mentally disturbed daughter—both of which they'd hoped to give the slip, somehow. Even though Margulies' characters are barely three-dimensional, Lynn Cohen and Paul Stolarsky bring real life to the parents, who have dealt with their pain well enough to function but have damaged their daughter severely in the process. It's hard, though, to tell who in this otherwise good production is to blame for Roberta Wallach's over-the-top performance as the gluttonous, yelping, delusional Debby—the actress, the writer, or the director (Lisa Peterson). She's supposed to be darkly comic, not unintentionally funny. Also with Akili Prince. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 333-4052. Closes Nov. 12.)

Moon Over Buffalo—Carol Burnett, whose last Broadway appearance was thirty years ago (Carol, please don't let that happen again), and Philip Bosco star as husband-and-wife actors in Ken Ludwig's backstage farce, set in a small Buffalo theatre in the early fifties. The play is as forgettable as Burnett is not—our reigning red-headed queen of comedy is delightful to behold. Bosco gives good support as her bluff, egotistical hubby. Also with Jane Connell (who has the thankless job of playing a character whose only function is to be hard of hearing), Randy Graff, and Dennis Ryan. Tom Moore directed. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Moonlight—Jason Robards, Blythe Danner, and Paul Hecht lead the cast in the Roundabout's production of Harold Pinter's latest play. Directed by Karel Reisz. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Laura Pels, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

Moscow Stations—Tom Courtenay, playing equal parts underground man and commuting mixologist, dispenses insight about the souls of Muscovites as well as recipes for home brews that belong on a shelf next to the solvents, in an anecdotal two-act monologue adapted from the 1969 samizdat novel (published in 1980) by Venidikt Yerofeyev. Courtenay's loquacious drinker isn't just a barstool metaphysician: his dignified, unresigned spirit always shines through. Ian Brown, of Edinburgh's Traverse Theatre, directed. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-4100.)

Murder at Minsing Manor: A Nancy Boys Mystery—Everett Quinton and his Ridiculous Theatrical Company take on the mystery genre in this farce by Michael Simon and Richard Simon. Mr. Quinton stars as the heroine, Glory Holden. (Actors' Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 239-6200.)

Northeast Local—Lincoln Center Theatre presents Terry Alexander, Eileen Heckart, Anthony LaPaglia, and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio in a new play by Tom Donaghy, which follows a working-class family through three decades. Gerald Gutierrez is the director. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

Party—In David Dillon's comedy, seven gay men get together to play a strip version of truth or dare, with terrifically funny (if occasionally didactic) results. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.)

Patti LuPone on Broadway—With her Garland-size renditions of her musical-theatre triumphs ("Don't Cry for Me, Argentina"; "As If We Never Said Goodbye"), the star confirms her place among all the other divas on the midtown marquees. When she applies her lungs to the unamplified ballad "Moonshine Lullaby," you realize that she needs miking about as much as Ethel Merman did. (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200. Closes Nov. 18.)

Picasso at the Lapin Agile—This play from the pen of Steve Martin, which had its première in 1993 at Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre, is set in 1904, in a Parisian bistro where a young Albert Einstein (Mark Nelson) and a younger Pablo Picasso (Tim Hopper) discuss big ideas. Randall Arney is the director. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 239-6200.)

Private Lives—A Pan Asian Repertory Theatre production of Noël Coward's comedy. (Playhouse 46 at St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 245-2660.)

Songs for a New World—The WPA Theatre opens its nineteenth season with a revue written by Jason Robert Brown and directed by Daisy Prince. (519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523.)

Spoonbread and Strawberry Wine—Norma Jean Darden—model, caterer, actress—shares recipes and talks about her family in this reprise of her play, which was inspired by the cookbook she wrote with her sister, Carole Darden. (American Place Theatre, 111 W. 46th St. 840-3074.)

Swinging on a Star—A musical tribute to the lyrics of Johnny Burke ("Misty," "Pennies from Heaven," "Moonlight Becomes You"), written and directed by Michael Leeds, with choreography by Kathleen Marshall. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Sylvia—A dog named Sylvia (Jan Hooks) brings meaning to the life of a middle-aged currency trader (John Cunningham) while driving a canine-shaped wedge between him and his wife (Mary Beth Peil). Unfortunately, A. R. Gurney's comedy, directed by John Tillinger, lacks bite. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

Too Jewish?—Avi Hoffman sets about reviving Yiddish in this mixture of songs and stories. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

Victor/Victoria—Julie Andrews has returned to Broadway to star, with Tony Roberts, Michael

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OPENS DECEMBER 15

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Paramount
A VIACOM COMPANY

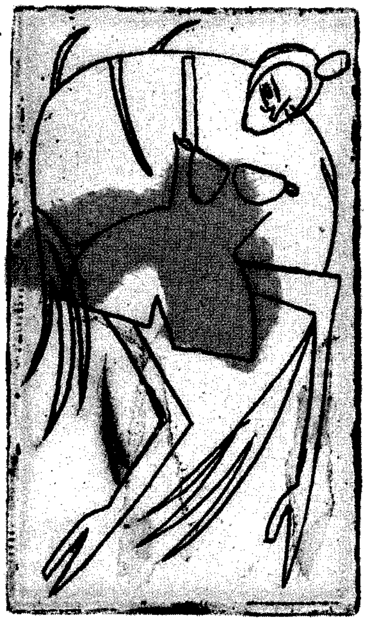
Nouri, and Rachel York, in a theatrical version of the 1982 movie. Written and directed by Blake Edwards. Choreography by Rob Marshall; score by the late Henry Mancini. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

What You Said—The improv company Chicago City Limits presents a new revue, featuring its ever-popular five-minute musical. (Chicago City Limits Theatre, First Ave. at 61st St. 888-5233.)

Zombies from the Beyond—A musical sendup of the science-fiction movies of the fifties. (Players, 115 MacDougal St. 254-5076.)

LONG RUNS

AFTER-PLAY: Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 239-6200. . . . **BEAUTY AND THE BEAST:** Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CRAZY FOR YOU:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **DEATH DEFYING ACTS:** Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **GRANDMA SYLVIA'S FUNERAL:** SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. 691-1555. . . . **GREASE!:** Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200. . . . **HAVING OUR SAY:** Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE HEIRESS:** Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **PERFECT CRIME:** Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **ROB BECKER'S DEFENDING THE CAVEMAN:** Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 307-4100. . . . **SHOW BOAT:** Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100. . . . **SMOKEY JOE'S CAFÉ—THE SONGS OF LEIBER AND STOLLER:** Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200. . . . **STOMP:** Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at St. Marks Pl. 477-2477. . . . **SUNSET BOULEVARD:** Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 307-4007. . . . **SWINGTIME CANTEEN:** Blue Angel, 321 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 279-4200.



Compagnie Marie Chouinard, at the Joyce Theatre.

NANCY POPPER

DANCE

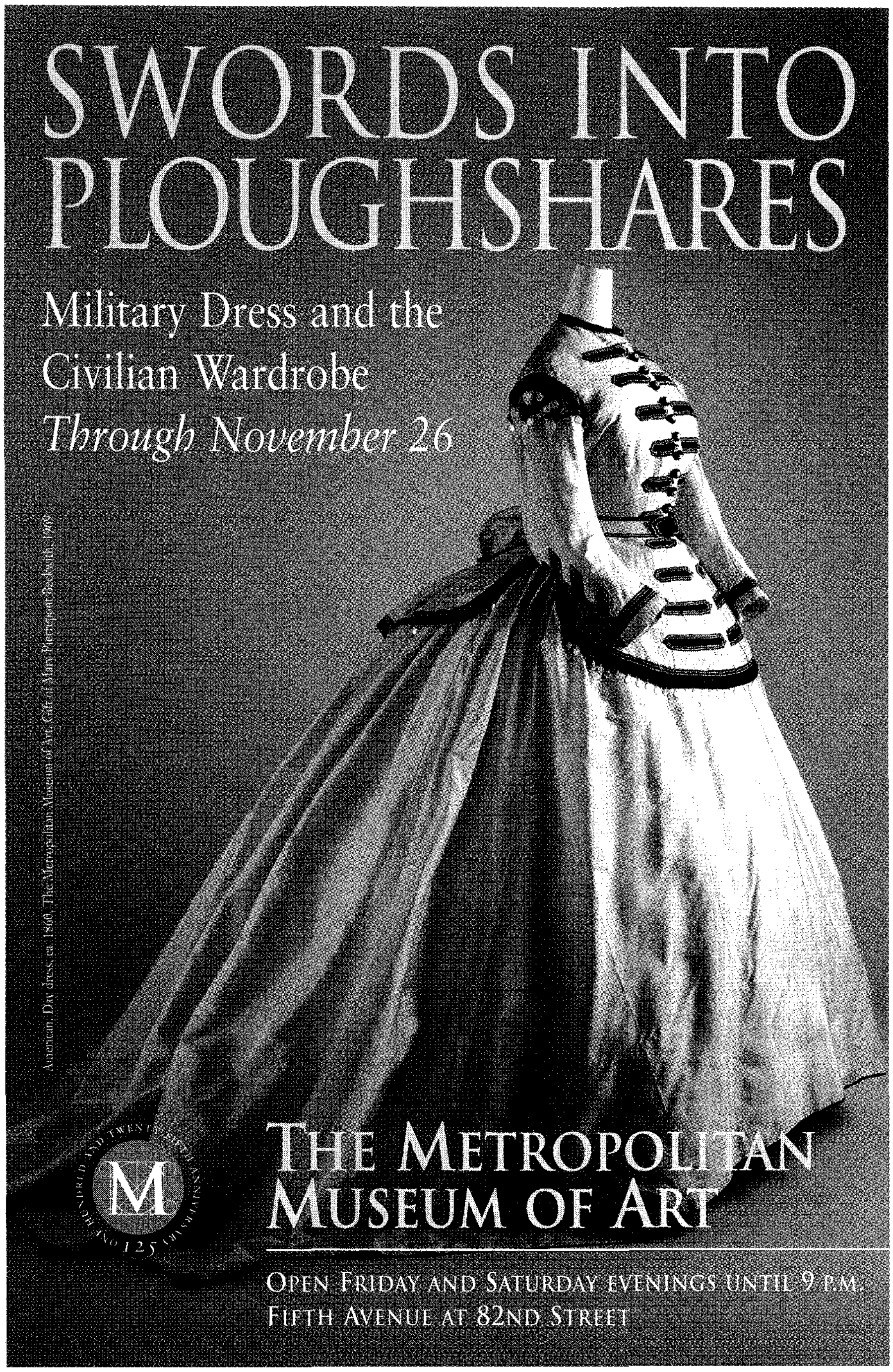
San Francisco Ballet—Final performances of the engagement. Nov. 1 at 8 and Nov. 4 at 2: "Stravinsky Violin Concerto," "Pacific," "Tuning Game," and "The Dance House." . . . ¶ Nov. 2 and Nov. 4 at 8: "Con Brio," "Sonata," and "Lambarena." . . . ¶ Nov. 3 at 8 and Nov. 5 at 3: "Maelstrom," "Quartette," and "Terra Firma." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

Compagnie Marie Chouinard—The Quebec-based company reinterprets two works originally choreographed by Nijinsky: "Prélude à l'Après-Midi d'un Faune" (in this outing, the faun is a woman) and "Le Sacre du Printemps." Chouinard preserves the Hellenic bas-relief movements that Nijinsky favored but accentuates the primitive writhing animality. The lighting for the second work, which has the torchlit look of the Lascaux caves, is by the choreographer. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Nov. 1-4 at 8 and Nov. 5 at 2.)

"Food for Thought/Bagnolet Platform"—For the New York qualifying round of the fifth Rencontres Chorégraphiques Internationales de Seine-Saint-Denis, nine choreographers (three each night) present half-hour portions of their work. Two European judges, who travel to nineteen countries to attend twenty-nine of these events, are seated somewhere in the audience; they do not necessarily share local tastes. Those selected perform on a program in a Parisian suburb as a prelude to an international tour. Nov. 3 at 8:30: John Jasperse presents "Excessories," his ode to bondage; Lucy Guérin and Kumiko Kimoto also appear. . . . ¶ Nov. 4 at 8:30: Neil Greenberg offers a selection from his evening-length "Not-About-AIDS-Dance." . . . ¶ Nov. 5 at 8:30: Neta Pulvermacher and her company perform "Five Beds/Children of the Dream," a memoir about growing up in a kibbutz on the Golan Heights; Wally Cardona and Nicholas Leichter are also on the bill. (Danspace Project, St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 674-8194.)

"Fridays at Noon"—Choreographers Annie-B Parson and Janet Gerson present "Les Noces" (Parson's sextet) and "Densities" (Gerson's solo), then discuss their work with the audience. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. Nov. 3 at noon. No tickets necessary.)

"Thin Air"—A selection of dances by choreographer Joy Kellman, including the duet "Yes" and the group works "Air" and "Again." (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 691-6500. Nov. 2-4 at 8 and Nov. 5 at 3.)



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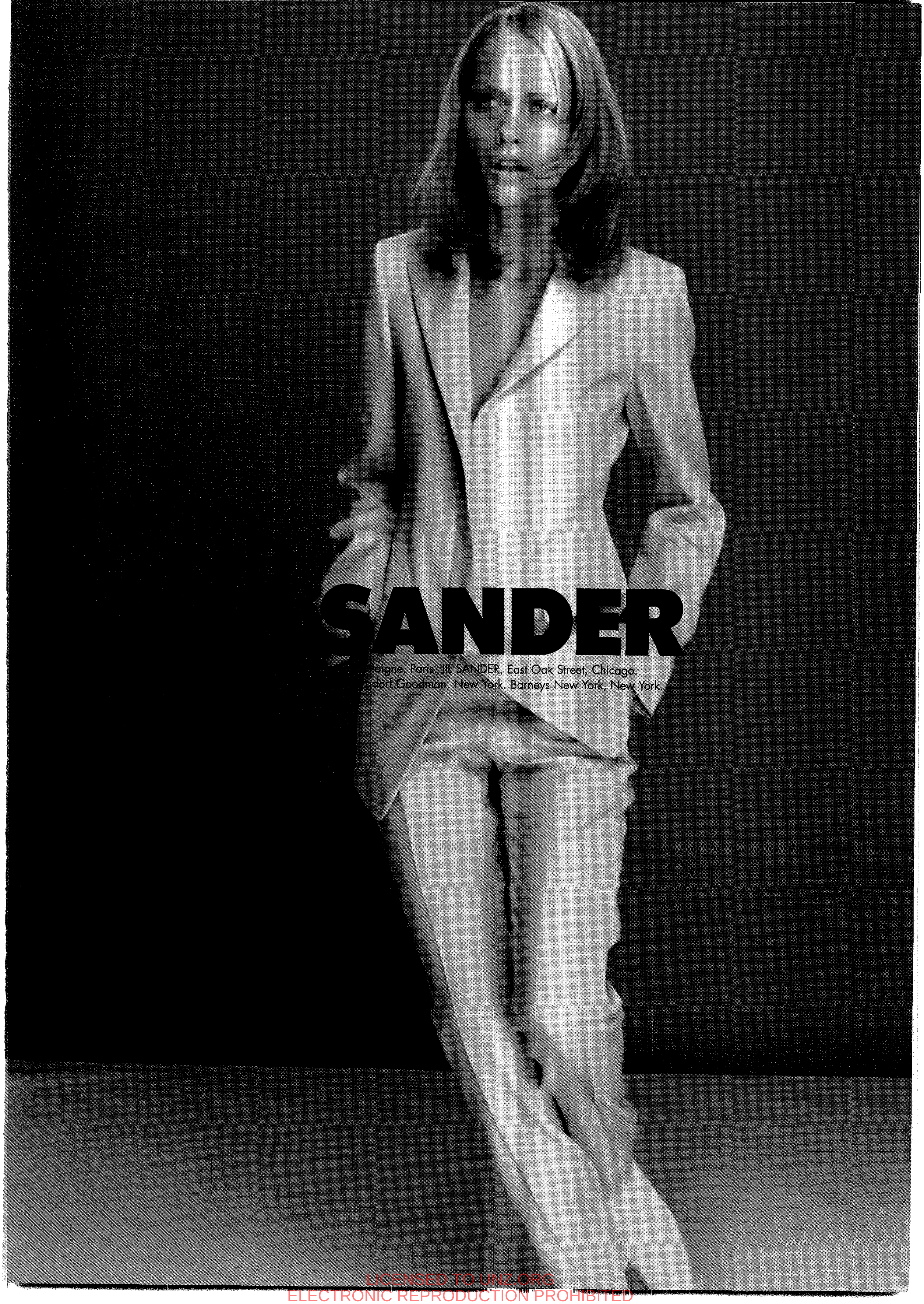
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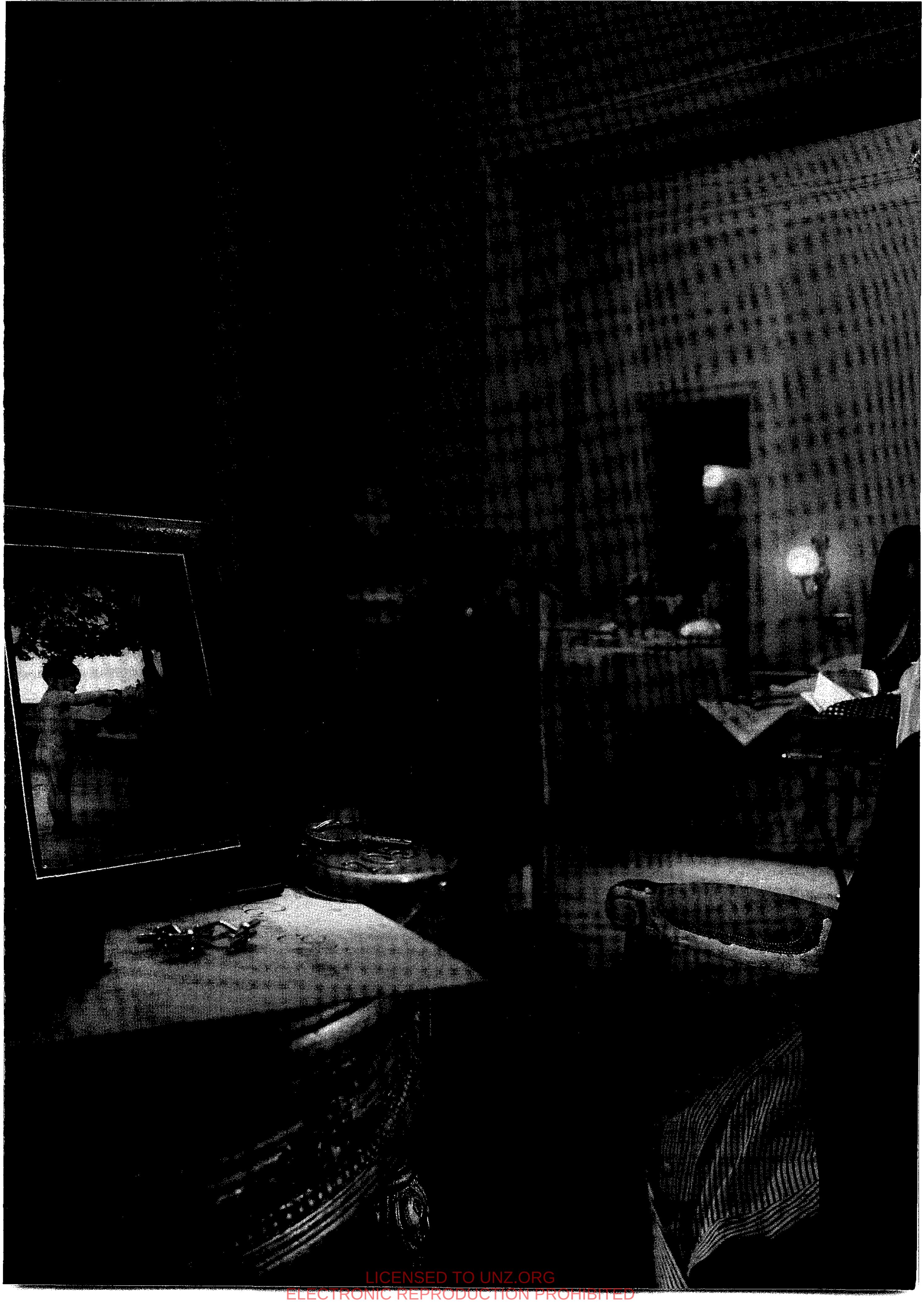


NIGHT LIFE

CONCERTS

Barry Harris Quintet—While most bop pianists attack the keys with the intensity of Secretariat on a good day, Harris seduces them with his easy touch, always placing melody before chops. His group will include John Mosca, the excellent trombonist and boss of the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Nov. 1 at 8.)

Billy Taylor Trio—His playing mirrors his persona: sturdy, erudite, and resolutely mainstream. The epiphanies may be few, but quality is a given. With Stanley Turrentine. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Nov. 2 at 7.)

Urge Overkill / Guided by Voices—The Chicago-based trio hit the big time last year when their feverish cover of Neil Diamond's "Girl, You'll Be a Woman Soon" showed up in "Pulp Fiction" (during Uma Thurman's ill-advised heroin experiment). Their new album, "Exit the Dragon," is less flamboyantly kitschy; the tunes are passionately crafted, and they're darker. Show up early for Guided by Voices, a madcap outfit from Dayton, Ohio, whose ringleader and resident genius, Robert Pollard, has quit his job as a fourth-grade teacher in order to boost his band's already frighteningly prolific output. (Estimates put the number of their songs in the mid-three-figure range.) In the past year, two overstuffed collections—"Bee Thousand" and "Alien Lanes"—have sent mature, sane people off humming titles like "The Goldheart Mountaintop Queen Directory" and "My Valuable Hunting Knife." (Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. 307-7171. Nov. 2 at 7:30.)

Sweet Honey in the Rock—This riveting all-female a-cappella quintet, now in its second decade, has just released a terrific collection, "Sacred Ground." Bernice Johnson Reagon, one of the group's founding members, recently produced and hosted an N.P.R. series called "Wade in the Water: African-American Sacred Music Traditions," so it's not surprising that the new album includes, in addition to R. & B. and jazz, spirituals and gospel standards. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Nov. 3 at 8.)

Kadri Gopalnath—The Indian saxophonist. (Merkin Concert Hall. Nov. 4 at 8.)

David Broza—The Israeli pop star. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Nov. 4 at 8:30.)

The Pretenders with the Duke String Quartet—Before there was Courtney Love there was Chrissie Hynde, front woman par excellence. In 1994, her band came back with a vengeance, releasing "Last of the Independents," their first album in four years and their best in a decade. An exhilarating club tour followed, and now they return, with a string quartet, for an acoustic greatest-hits program. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Nov. 4-5 at 8.)

Dave McKenna—A mainstream monster, this pianist has a left hand that's a force of nature—a massive generator capable of putting any bassist out of business. And his wit is as celebrated as his virtuosity. (Church of the Heavenly Rest, Fifth Ave. at 90th St. 752-1428. Nov. 5 at 5.)

Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra—Mating the diligence of a scholar with the rabid enthusiasm of a lifelong fan, Renaissance man Gunther Schuller knows just about everything there is to know about jazz. He presents a program devoted to the Maestro, Duke Ellington, and three piano giants—James P. Johnson, Fats Waller, and Art Tatum—in which he will conduct and Steven Mayer will handle the awesome piano responsibilities. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Nov. 5 at 2.)

Elastica—The Brit sensations may no longer be flavor-of-the-month across the pond, but their ease with the sounds of Blondie and the Buzzcocks has nevertheless kept them at the forefront of the so-called New Wave of New Wave movement. Punchy guitars, spiky rhythms, and abundant brattiness made their eponymous début one of this year's keepers. (Academy, 234 W. 43rd St. 307-7171. Nov. 6 at 8.)

Engelbert Humperdinck—The British saxophonist turned bedroom balladeer hits town on his Harley-Davidson, and not a minute too soon—he looks pretty damn buff after more than thirty years in the business, but he's no Tom Jones. On this tour he'll once again be entertaining a disproportionate number of female fans, with songs from his familiar repertoire ("Release Me," "After the Lovin'") as well as selections from "Love Unchained," his recording of hits by such biggies as Elvis and Nat King Cole. (Westbury Music Fair. 1-516 334-0800. Nov. 7 at 8.)

CLUBS

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type indicates some of the more notable performers in town. Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it is advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

Blarney Star, 43 Murray St. (732-2873)—Home to fine Irish music every Friday night.

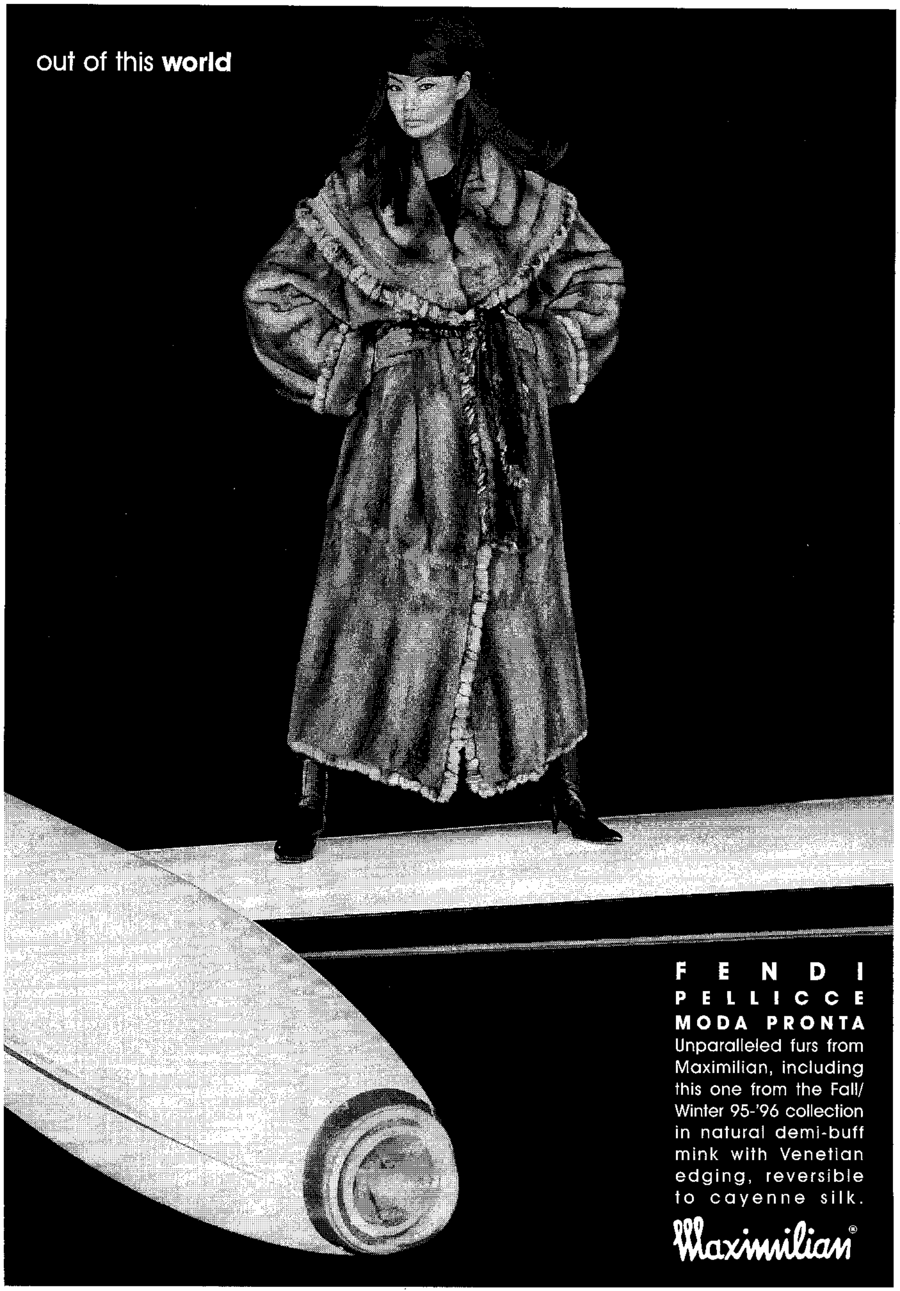
Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Decent sight lines, great greasy food, prodigiously talented waitresses, and a consistent roster of high-quality acts. Nov. 4: Songwriters **GUY CLARK** and **TOWNES VAN ZANDT.**

Brownies, 169 Avenue A, at 10th St. (420-8392)—Chicago's **RED RED MEAT** (Nov. 4) meanders through Stonesy, bluesy jams and the occasional trance-induced state.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Rock and roll always sounds best in a dump, which may be why this legendary club is still thriving. Nov. 2: Dandelion.

Downtime, 251 W. 30th St. (695-2747)—A friendly split-level bar with a dazzling quasi-Cubist paint job and an above-average pool table.

Duplex, 61 Christopher St., at Seventh Ave. (255-5438)—Everyone is a star here—the pianist, the bartender, the waiters, and the



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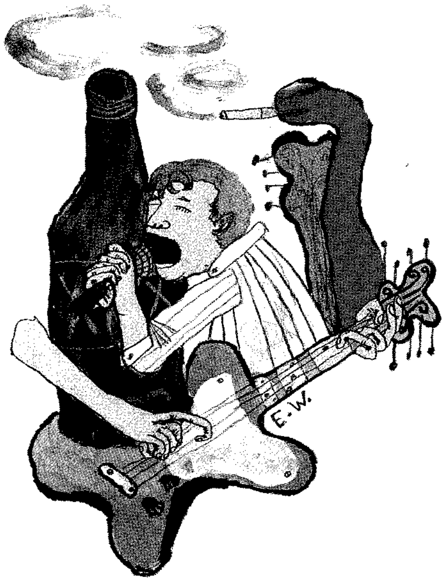
audience. The fabulous **DRESSING ROOM DIVAS** are in the house every Friday night.

Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—A comfortable neo-Moroccan bar hidden inside the Time Café. The downstairs room, where bands perform, is a fine spot to take in a show. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

Ibis Supper Club, 327 W. 44th St. (262-1111)—Live music, belly dancing, and an honest-to-God whirling dervish, every Wednesday through Sunday.

Irving Plaza, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—This sprawling two-floor establishment has been all things to all people: meeting hall, rock club, jazz club, Off Broadway theatre. Nov. 1: An evening of Frank Zappa music. Nov. 2: **G. LOVE & SPECIAL SAUCE.** This dynamite trio from Philadelphia plays amazingly loose and swinging rap songs—funky odes to John Lee Hooker, hoops, beer, and other lowdown pleasures. Nov. 3-4: **MARILYN MANSON.** Nov. 6: From Chapel Hill, North Carolina, the headquarters of indie rock, come the fab sounds of **BEN FOLDS FIVE,** a smart piano-based trio led by Ben Folds, who plays a wondrously jaunty baby grand and sings like a cross between Joe Jackson and Freddie Mercury. With **HEATHER NOVA,** whose début video, "Walk This World" (from the record "Oyster"), has a junior-year-abroad winsomeness—Nova, as a gamine busker, sings her heart out in various Continental locales. Eurailpass nostalgia aside, the conceit is an appropriate one: the capable singer is an American living in London, and her songwriting achieves a fine balance between British pop and American folk-rock, and between the youthful and the world-weary. . . . ¶ The Swing Dance Society gathers here every Sunday, with sets from eight until midnight. For information on the society, call 696-9737.



Guided by Voices, at Roseland.

ESTHER WATSON

Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—Nov. 3: The **SKATALITES.**

Limelight, Sixth Ave. at 20th St. (807-7850)—A church turned eighties hot spot, this unholy venue currently plays host to a variety of techno and alternative acts. Nov. 5: Original Kiss members **ACE FREHLEY** and **PETER CRISS.** Wednesday night is Disco 2000.

Ludlow Street Café, 165 Ludlow St. (353-0536)—An unassuming basement restaurant-bar, where you can drink cheap and catch live music nightly. Mondays belong to **BEAT RODEO,** a straight-shooting bar band that plays a mixture of country, blues, Dylan, Byrds, Velvets, and various pop curiosities.

Monkey Bar, 60 E. 54th St. (838-2600)—Beyond the monkey murals, there's a bright see-and-be-seen dining arena that's perfect

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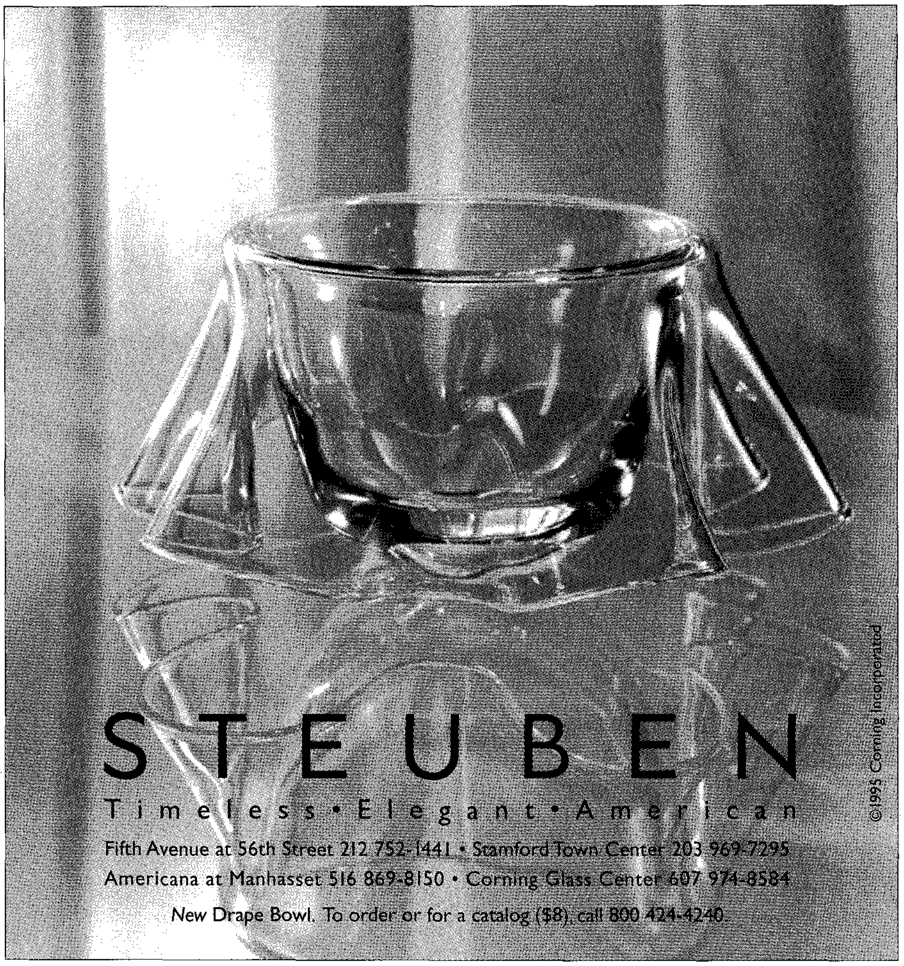

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for committing high-profile indiscretions in a strapless gown. But the place to be is the dark and crowded bar up front, by the grand piano, where the bar stools look like stuffed olives. You perch on the pimiento. Dining.

NELL'S, 246 W. 14th St. (675-1567)—A Victorian-style club, home to an eclectic crowd of downtown youngsters dancing to throbbing funk and techno-pop.

LES POULETS, 16 W. 22nd St. (229-2000)—The name may be French, but the music here is Latin: expect salsa, merengue, and, now and then, a cha-cha. Dining.

RODEO BAR, 375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (683-6500)—The walls simulate a log cabin, a buffalo head blows smoke through its nostrils, a horse trailer has been converted into a bar, and you get peanuts for eating and, sometimes, throwing.

S.O.B.'S, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—Nov. 1-2: **ANGELA BOFILL.** Though she's primarily a jazz vocalist, Bofill was brought up on Latin rhythms (by her Cuban father) and Motown soul (by her Puerto Rican mother); both influences are apparent in the singer's repertoire, and she's got a sensuous way with a romantic ballad. Nov. 3: The **YELLOWJACKETS.** The great **CELIA CRUZ** begins a two-night stand on Nov. 7. Dining.

WEBSTER HALL, 125 E. 11th St. (353-1600)—A byzantine disco wonderland with four floors, a coffee shop, and a wig boutique. Wednesday is drag night. Psychedelic Thursdays feature grunge acts and cheap beer.

WETLANDS, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Nov. 2: **FOR LOVE NOT LISA.** Nov. 3: **MEDESKI, MARTIN, AND WOOD.** Driven by John Medeski's Hammond organ, this trio plays churning bebop. They know their funk, too, but they're not averse to a little harmonic sophistication.

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Vocalist **ANDREA MARCOVICCI** is currently at work in the woody nook known as the Oak Room. Dining.

BIRDLAND, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—An airy two-tiered space with pastel walls and potted greenery. Dining.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Jazz, mirrors, and a gift shop. For decades, **LARRY CARLTON** (through Nov. 5) was best known as the pre-eminent session guitarist—he could be heard on everything from Steely Dan records to TV theme songs. A few years back, he suffered nerve damage from a gunshot wound, which nearly ended his career. After extensive rehab, he's back, playing with an evangelical fire. The **JOHN SCOFIELD** quartet takes over on Nov. 7. Dining.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—On any given night, and well into the morning, one or another of New York's many formidable pianists can be found here. **MULGREW MILLER** (through Nov. 4) is a product of Memphis, a town whose jazz pianists invariably fall under the looming, legendary shadow of Phineas Newborn. Miller tested his mettle with Art Blakey in the eighties; he can be loquacious, but his grand touch and sweeping attack are never overwhelming. His foil will be guitarist Russell Malone, who's shaping up to be a contender. Starting Nov. 6: like the guitar, the vibraphone too often brings out the showoff in a jazz musician; happily, the once prolix **STEVE NELSON** is learning to hold back, replacing bluster with structure and flash with lyricism. Dining.

CAJUN, 129 Eighth Ave., at 16th St. (691-6174)—A New Orleans-style restaurant specializing in Dixieland and swing. On Fridays, catch the Canal Street Dixieland Jazz and Blues band. Saturdays belong to the New Atlantic Jazz band.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound pastel murals, and, through New Year's Eve, the great **BOBBY SHORT.** Time has not diminished the tasteful virtuosity of Short's ivory-tinkling, nor has it taken the edge off his gregarious wit as a singer and showman. A fixture at the Carlyle, he can still spin an Ira Gershwin lyric with all the sophistication, humor, and pathos it deserves. Also well served are gems by Duke Ellington, Dorothy Fields, Irving Berlin, and, of course, Cole Porter. A de-lightful, de-lovely evening. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL** is in attendance.

TABLES FOR TWO

Dining around town

NADAMAN HAKUBAI, in the Hotel Kitano, 66 Park Ave., at 38th St. (681-6007)—Remember when a sushi dinner was the culinary equivalent of bungee jumping? These days, a platter of raw fish is about as adventurous as a pastrami sandwich. But as our love affair with Japanese cuisine fades into familiarity, there's a whole new meal to explore: breakfast.

Several restaurants in New York serve the authentic Japanese item; the plush Hotel Kitano—recently reopened after a four-year renovation—offers the finest. The Kitano caters almost exclusively to visiting Japanese businessmen, so the staff may seem a bit apprehensive when a Western face appears. They will say, "Japanese breakfast only," concerned, perhaps, that the lack of flapjacks will ignite a scandal. Smile and say, "I know." Then order the large.

Japanese breakfast is, at first glance, a lot like Japanese dinner: you get a piece of salmon (cooked), a steaming bowl of miso soup, a bucket of fresh velvety tofu, and a big tray (the selection varies daily) crammed with pickles, marinated eggplant, yam paste, seaweed, spicy cod roe, and, of course, a vat of rice, all served in delicate ceramic vessels. An alternative to plain white rice is *okayu*, a hot porridge not unlike Cream of Rice, which is enjoyed for its curative properties. Before the renovation, breakfast also came with a raw egg, which arrived without instructions (you were supposed to crack it into a bowl, add soy sauce, and pour it over your rice). Fear of salmonella has put the kibosh on that—now you get a tiny omelette sprinkled with scallions and baby mushrooms. (Open daily; breakfast served from 7 to 9:30. $24.)

FIFTY SEVEN FIFTY SEVEN, 57 E. 57th St. (758-5757)—A cool, sumptuous piano-and-bass room in the Four Seasons Hotel, with twenty-two-foot-high ceilings, a long backlit bar stocked with single-malt Scotch, and fine jazz seven nights a week. Dining.

FIVE SPOT, 4 W. 31st St. (631-0100)—Set in a mammoth turn-of-the-century ballroom, this jazz club is all marble and gilt, with a few modern touches, such as the zebra-patterned carpet in the V.I.P. room upstairs. Dining.

IRIDIUM, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Across the street from Lincoln Center, this restaurant and club features a handsome bar upstairs and a surreal performance space downstairs. Through Nov. 5: the **MC COY TYNER** trio. Had pianist Tyner retired after leaving John Coltrane's group in 1965, he'd still be remembered as one of the most brilliant and individualistic players of an era that prized iconoclasm in its musicians. But Tyner never succumbed to the temptations of an electronic age; on his seventies records, he didn't have to plug in his piano to make it thunder and ring with authority. A certain laxness pervades his eighties work, but his drive returned with the dawn of the nineties. With guest saxophonist Michael Brecker. The **ABBEY LINCOLN** quintet begins a weeklong run on Nov. 7. Celebrating the joys of a midlife resurgence, she of the gutsy survivor spirit and the indeterminate pitch struts a stage with such force that it seems as if she'll be around forever.

KNICKERBOCKER, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Brass rails, vintage posters, Hirschfeld drawings, and a piano. Nov. 1-4: Piano and bass with Russ Kassoff and Linc Milliman.

LE MADELEINE, 403 W. 43rd St. (246-2993)—Every Sunday evening, guitar great **GENE BERTONCINI** lights up this cozy Hell's Kitchen bistro with his simmering melodicism and chordal grace.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—On Mondays, Woody Allen continues his night job as clarinet player in the **NEW ORLEANS FUNERAL AND RAGTIME ORCHESTRA,** a Dixieland-jazz ensemble. Closed Sundays.

RAINBOW & STARS, 30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000)—A plush, old-fashioned night club, sixty-five floors above it all, complete with Art Deco fixtures, intimate glitter, and a panoramic view as dizzying as the tab. **AMANDA MC BROOM** is in through mid-November. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in the Rainbow Room, there's a revolving dance floor, plus swinging big-band music courtesy of the Rainbow Room Orchestra, featuring vocalists Sean Mahony and Claudette Sierra. Closed Mondays.

SMALLS, 183 W. 10th St. (929-7565)—This aptly named club features up-and-coming players jamming late into the night.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A jazz outpost where the musicians are always top-shelf. Through Nov. 5: the **KENNY BARRON** quintet. While the instrumentation couldn't be more standard, the results are imaginative and frequently brilliant. The program combines Barron's canny originals with ingeniously rearranged classics. The **SONNY FORTUNE** quartet takes the reins on Nov. 7. Dining.

TAVERN ON THE GREEN, Central Park W. at 67th St. (873-3200)—Vocalist Judy Argo is in through Nov. 5.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The world's most famous jazz club is also the last place in town that still looks, smells, and feels like a classic jazz club—subterranean, smoky, and thick with the spirits of past masters. She may call France her home, but the American-born singer **DEE DEE BRIDGEWATER** (through Nov. 5) is fondly remembered for her seventies stint with the Thad Jones–Mel Lewis big band and her subsequent Broadway turn in "The Wiz." Her new release pays tribute to composer Horace Silver, and once again she finds the intersection between sensuality and swing. There's a beauty to the best work of tenor saxophonist **JAVON JACKSON** (in for a week, starting Nov. 7): he has a hard, inviting sound and the agility of an acrobat, and his skills seem to be growing by the month. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays.

VISIONES, 125 Macdougal St., at W. 3rd St. (673-5576)—A tiny, low-key supper club where the jazz, like the Spanish-American cuisine, can take on a spicy, multicultural flavor.

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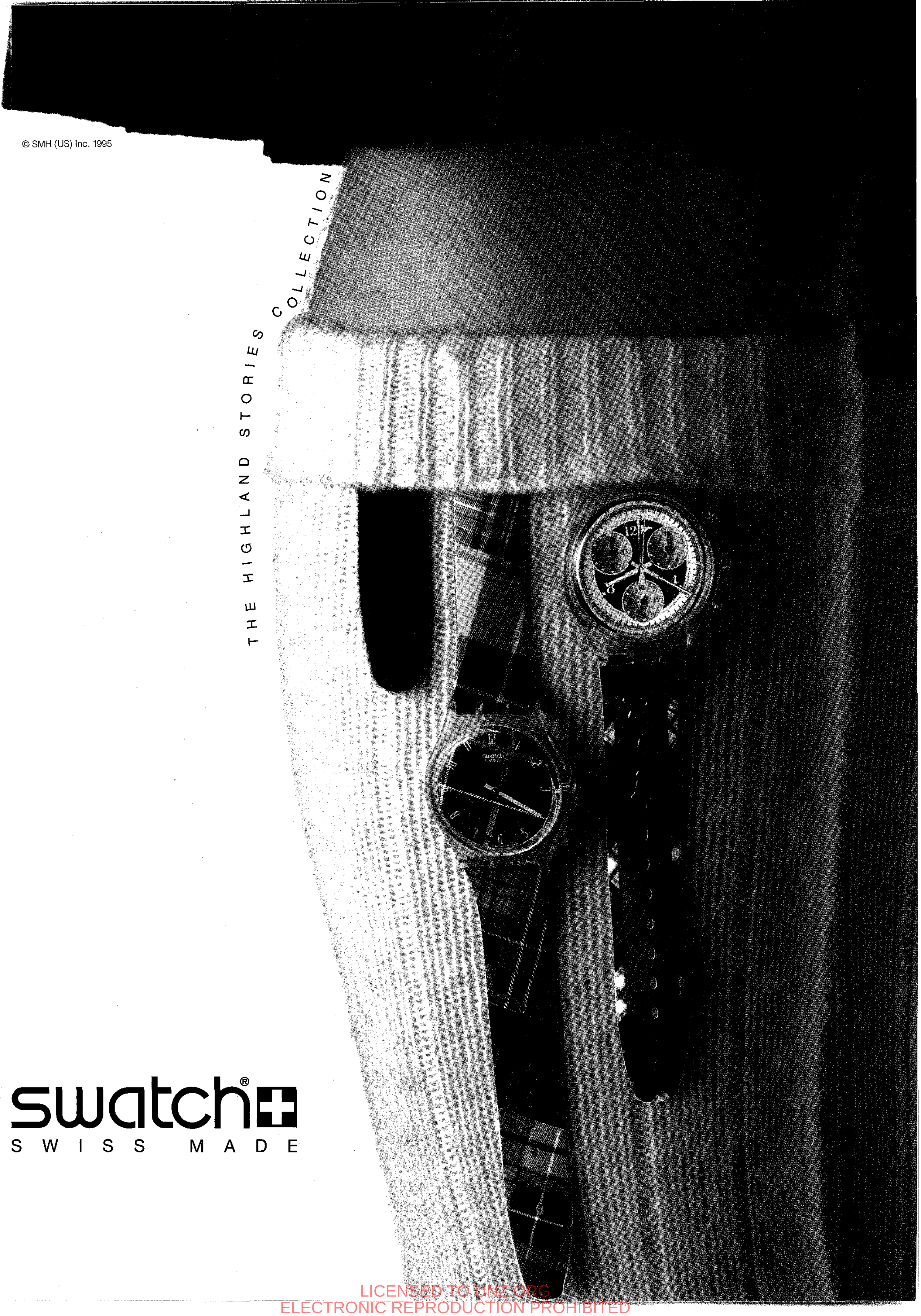
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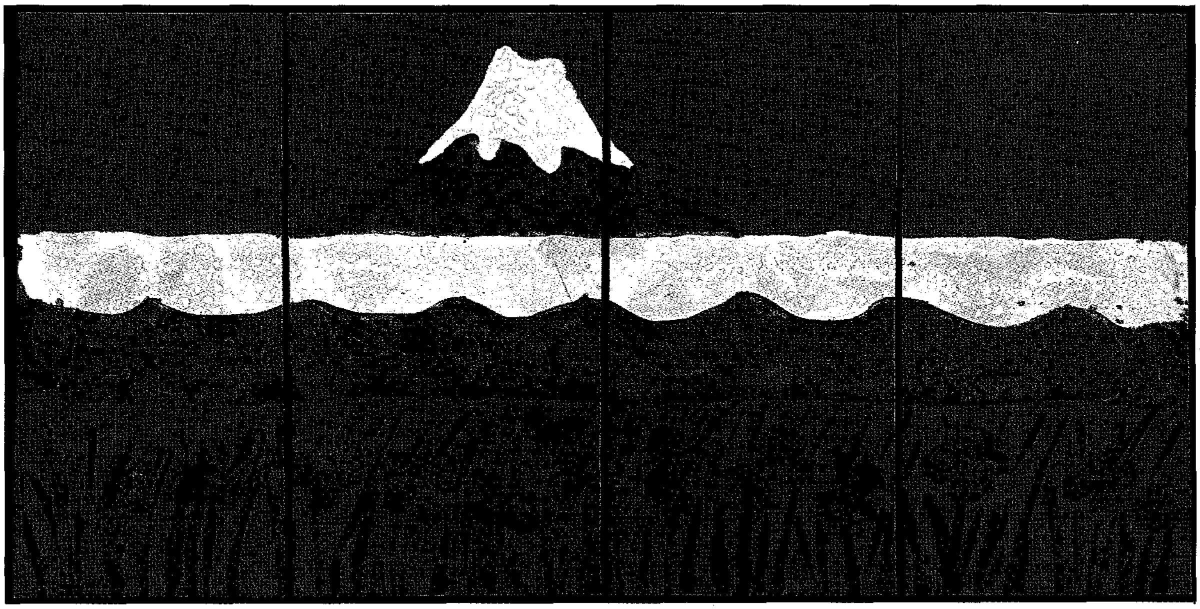
ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—Since the beginning of this century, scholarly and scientific analyses have cut the number of paintings believed to be authentic Rembrandts in half—from six hundred and fifty to around three hundred. "Rembrandt/Not Rembrandt," an exhibition displaying fifty-five paintings from the museum's collection by Rembrandt, his pupils, and emulators of his style, along with a selection of drawings and prints, explores these changes in attribution. Through Jan. 7. . . . ¶ "Howard Hodgkin: Paintings 1975-1995," a survey of the British abstract colorist's career. Starts Nov. 2. . . . ¶ "John Singleton Copley in America," seventy-five portraits of affluent Bostonians and New Yorkers, done before the artist packed up for London in 1775. Through Jan. 7. . . . ¶ "Goya in the Metropolitan Museum of Art." Through Dec. 31. . . . ¶ "Pages of Perfection," Islamic art from the Russian Academy of Sciences, in St. Petersburg, is remarkable not only for its rare early examples of Muslim calligraphy (dating as far back as the eighth century) but also for a group of late, decadent miniatures that imitate Western painting. Through Dec. 10. . . . ¶ "Swords Into Ploughshares," in the Costume Institute, offers a hundred outfits and a host of visual links between the wardrobes of the warrior and leisure classes. Through Nov. 26. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)



"Worlds Seen and Imagined: Japanese Screens from the Idemitsu Museum of Arts," at the Asia Society.

ANGELA ARNET

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Piet Mondrian: 1872-1944," which comes to New York from The Hague, via Washington, D.C., is a medium-sized blockbuster, with a hundred and sixty paintings and drawings, close to half of them from the thirties and forties. The MOMA installation has a few exclusives: "Broadway Boogie Woogie" and the unfinished "Victory Boogie Woogie," and a re-creation of the artist's last studio, at 15 E. 59th St. Through Jan. 23. . . . ¶ "Alfred Stieglitz at Lake George," ninety-three photographs taken at Stieglitz's upstate retreat, most of them from the twenties and thirties. Through Jan. 2. . . . ¶ Uta Barth, Joseph Bartscherer, Ulrich Görlich, and Eric Rondepierre have contributed new photographs and site-specific installations to "New Photography 11." Through Jan. 9. . . . ¶ "Light Construction" examines, through models, large photographs, and drawings, the concepts of transparency and translucency in contemporary architecture. Through Jan. 2. . . . ¶ Works from the seventies to the present by the French Conceptualist Annette Messager, who combines photographed, painted, and drawn images with found and constructed objects and text. Through Jan. 16. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays and Fridays, noon to 8:30.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"Claes Oldenburg: An Anthology" features more than two hundred of the Popster's hard and soft sculptures, collages, and drawings for existing large-scale projects and proposed colossal monuments. Through Jan. 21. . . . ¶ "Joel-Peter Witkin," a mid-career retrospective of the photographer's astonishing and horrifying œuvre. Through Jan. 14. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

Guggenheim Museum SoHo, 575 Broadway—Fluorescent-light sculptures from 1963 to 1987 by Dan Flavin. Through Nov. 30. . . . ¶ A survey of the conceptual photography of Dieter Appelt, supplemented by sculptural objects made by the artist for inclusion in these images. Through Nov. 5. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6, and Saturday evenings until 8.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—"Florine Stettheimer: Manhattan Fantastica." Through Nov. 5. . . . ¶ A show titled "Picassoid" examines, in the works of American artists, the influence of three phases of Picasso's career: Cubism, Classicism, and Surrealism. Through Dec. 10. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—"To the Ends of the Earth" includes fossils, field equipment, maps, and memorabilia from fifteen of the museum's fossil-hunting expeditions—from Medicine Bow, Wyoming, in 1901, to the current Gobi Desert digs. Through Dec. 10. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

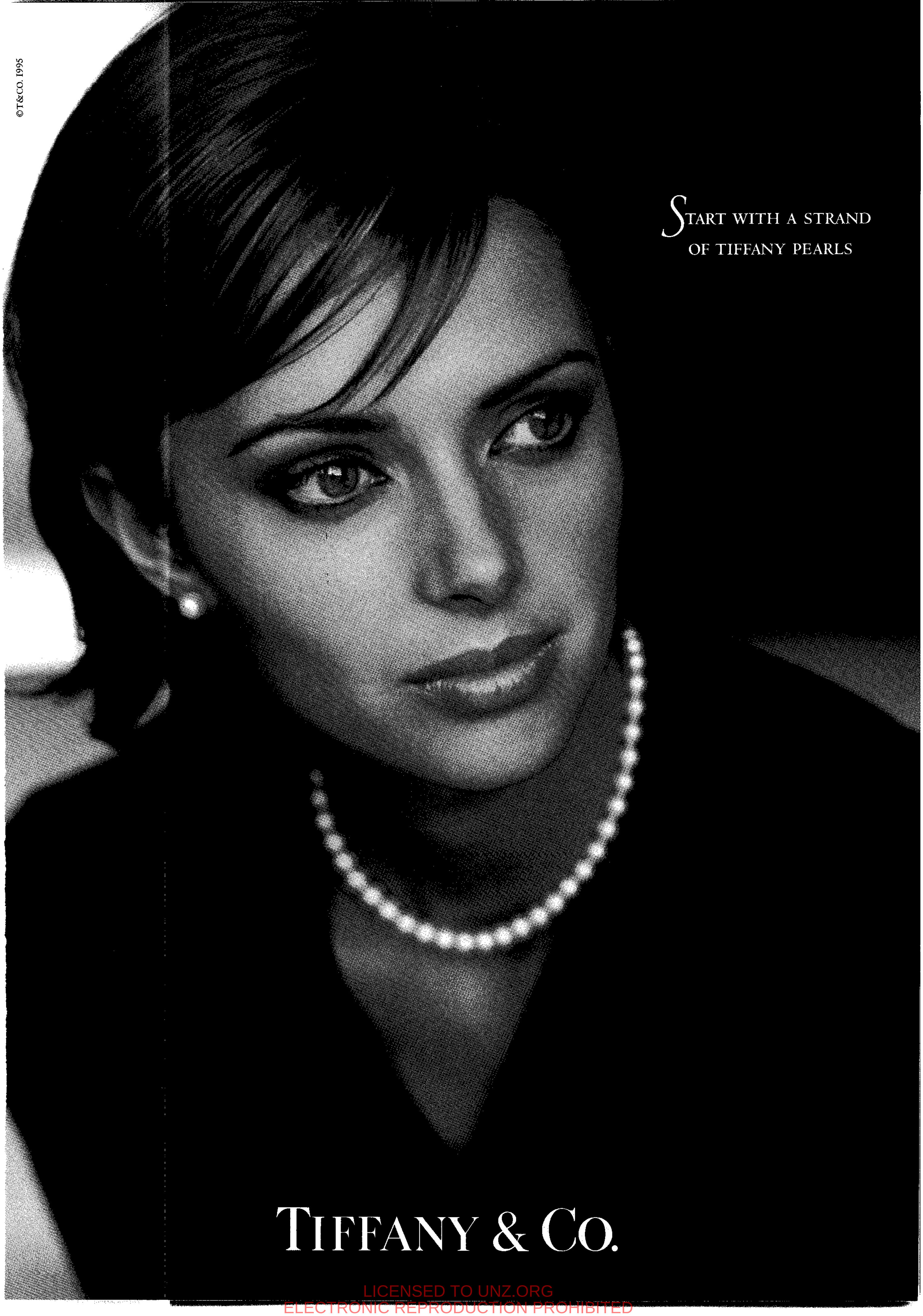
Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—"A Slice of Schiaparelli: Surrealism in Fashion." Fifty examples of the stylish inspirations of Elsa Schiaparelli (1890-1973): evening gloves with reptilian scales; a day suit with metallic ladybugs, grasshoppers, and cockroaches creeping across it; a hat of celluloid grapes; and more. . . . ¶ Human figures arise from root and boulder shapes in Alison Saar's sculptures "Tree Souls" and "Stone Souls." . . . ¶ "Leon Polk Smith: American Painter," a retrospective of large geometrical abstractions, most of them on oddly shaped canvases, by an eighty-nine-year-old artist who was inspired sixty years ago by his first sight of a Mondrian. Through Jan. 7. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.—"Craft in the Machine Age, 1920-45," a host of objects—furniture, textiles, vases, turned bowls, cocktail shakers, crystal—whose creation was influenced by modernist aspects of Scandinavian, French, and Bauhaus design, among others. Through Feb. 25. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St.—"Worlds Seen and Imagined," an impeccably researched, sumptuously installed exhibition of Japanese screens on loan from the Idemitsu Museum of Arts, in Tokyo. The show is so extensive (and the objects are so large) that it is running in two parts, the first part through Nov. 19, the second from Nov. 22 through Jan. 7. Both span the history of these gilded visions from the fifteenth through the early nineteenth century. Almost the entire surface of one dazzling seventeenth-century screen has been covered with gold leaf; spare red and white plum trees spin across it like haunted, sentient beings. An eighteenth-century piece by Sakai Hoitsu has startling modernist affinities: a dull metallic bridge that is like an abstract zigzag Barnett Newman might have painted, irises rendered in flat bright patches that resemble a Warhol paint-by-number. The most engrossing screen is a seventeenth-century map of the world, with dolphins diving and little ships sailing and amazingly accurate polar-view insets of the Northern and Southern Hemispheres which demonstrate that, while the Japanese may have been insular, they knew their position in the world. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Fashion Institute of Technology, Seventh Ave. at 27th St.—"Paris Modern: The Swedish Ballet 1920-25." The Ballets Suédois was an avant-garde hothouse nourished on the contributions of de Chirico, Picabia, Cocteau, Satie, Cole Porter, René Clair, and many others. The large trove of objects here—drawings, costume and set designs, stage models, photographs, and two full-size backdrops—admirably documents the company's short, fiery history. Through Jan. 13. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, noon to 8, and Saturdays, 10 to 5.)

New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St., at Central Park W.—Forty maps of New York City and the Empire State (culled from the society's vast collection of Western Hemisphere maps) are on display. You can search


START WITH A STRAND
OF TIFFANY PEARLS
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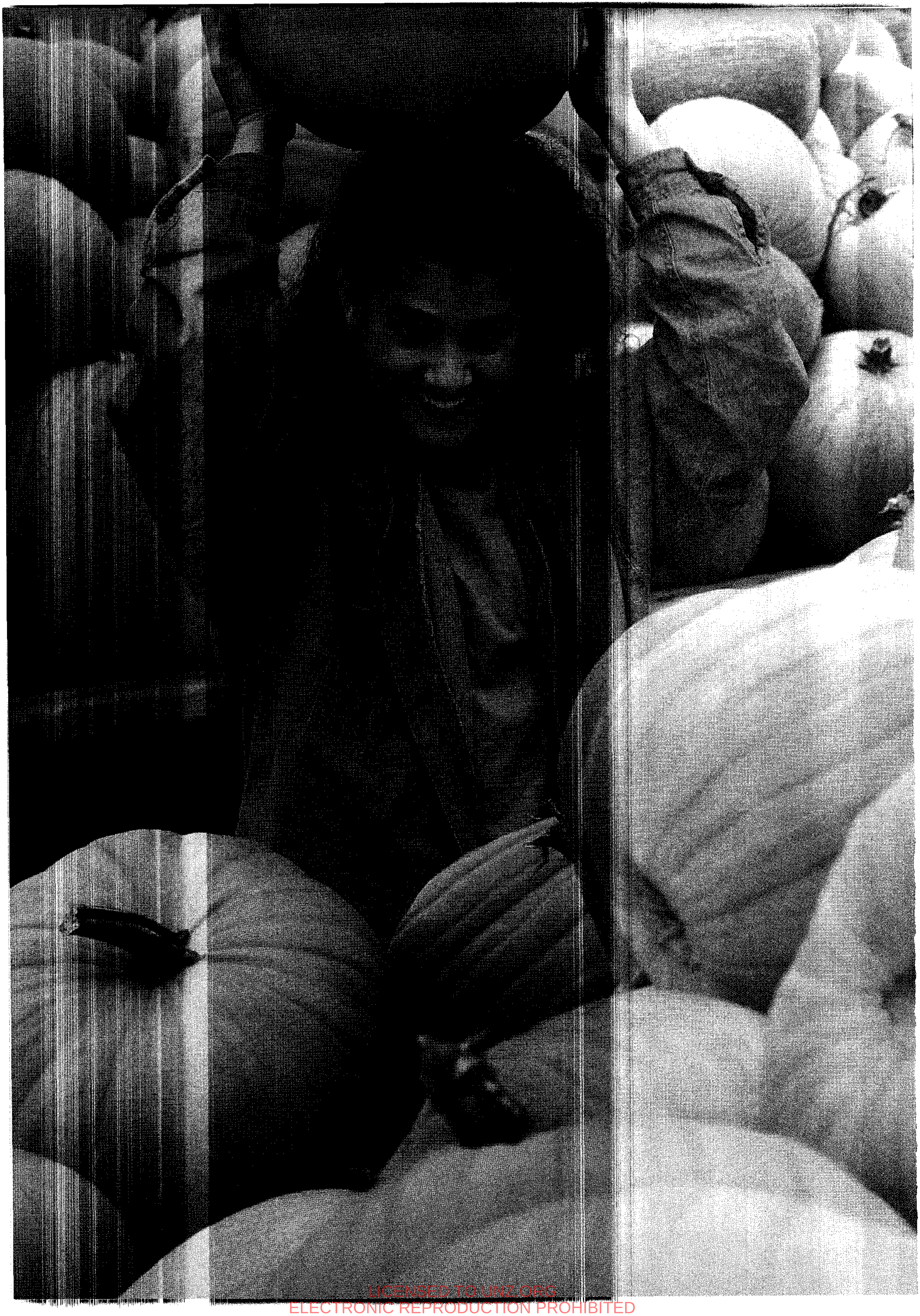

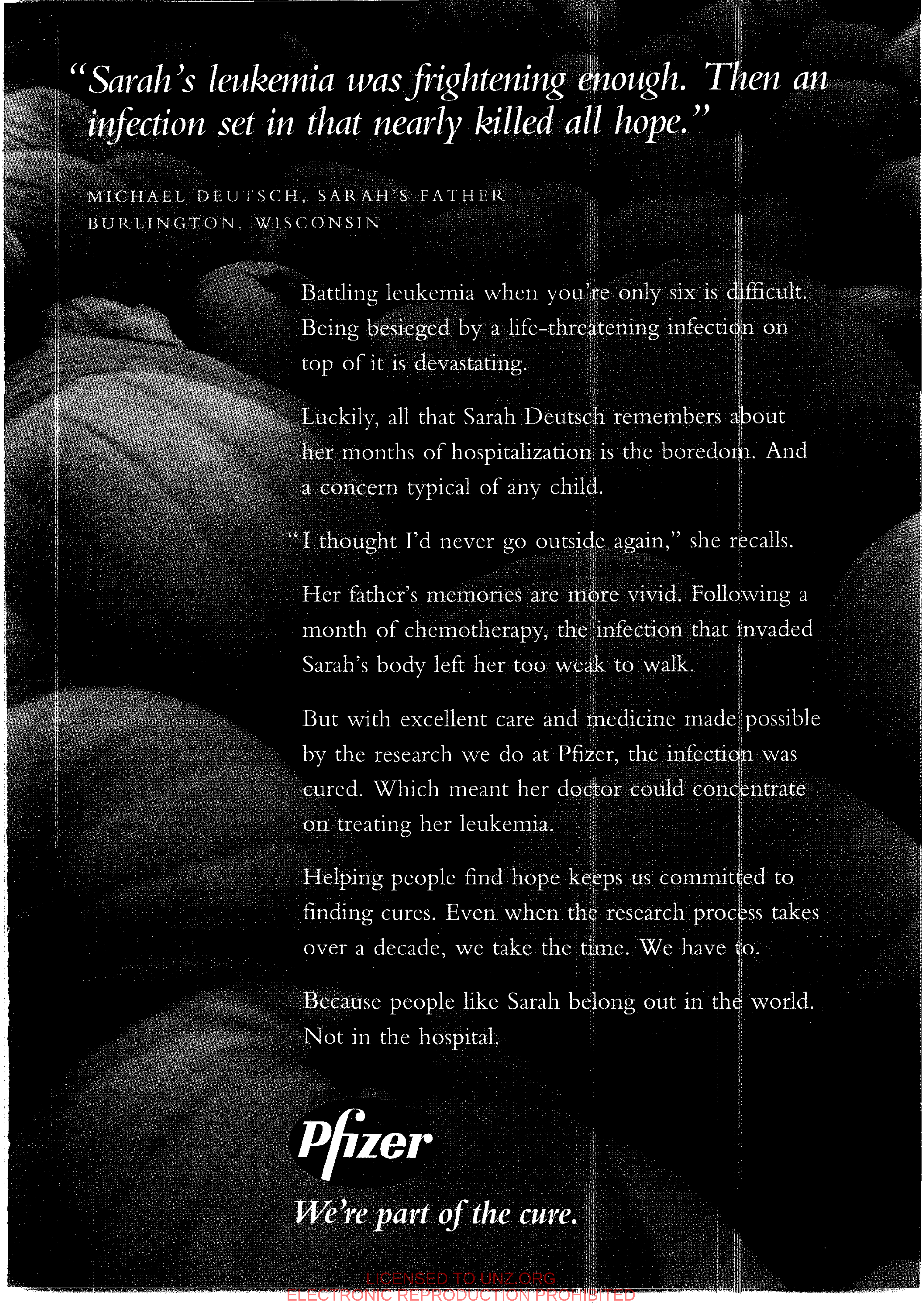

"Sarah's leukemia was frightening enough. Then an infection set in that nearly killed all hope."

MICHAEL DEUTSCH, SARAH'S FATHER
BURLINGTON, WISCONSIN

Battling leukemia when you're only six is difficult. Being besieged by a life-threatening infection on top of it is devastating.

Luckily, all that Sarah Deutsch remembers about her months of hospitalization is the boredom. And a concern typical of any child.

"I thought I'd never go outside again," she recalls.

Her father's memories are more vivid. Following a month of chemotherapy, the infection that invaded Sarah's body left her too weak to walk.

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out vanished neighborhoods (like Clarenceville, Queens, now part of Richmond Hill), women-owned farms of the eighteen-twenties, and every single fire hydrant standing in 1834 (that year's "Fireman's Guide" provided the best overview of the city; it needed some alterations after the Great Fire of 1835). Through Jan. 21. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5, and Wednesday evenings until 8.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Gordon Cook (1927-85)—still-life oil paintings of everyday objects, rendered in dead space and given strange, monumental significance. A pair of rubbers has the scale and the intimidating presence of hot rods; a milliner's gray-felt hat form is positively terrifying. Through Nov. 11. (Schmidt Bingham, 41 E. 57th St.)

Helen Frankenthaler—The grande dame of Abstract Expressionism hasn't lost her ability to surprise. In these recent paintings, she uses outrageous, even ugly colors for purposes that seem suspiciously close to figuration. "Russet" resembles a desert landscape, or perhaps a beach—at any rate, the blue is on top and the earth tones are at the bottom. "Skytrail" is a retina-blasting lavender, with green Miró-like blobs melting and red lines dying away. Through Nov. 4. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

Red Grooms—Several new "sculpto-pictoramas," the artist's moniker for his mixed-media painted sculptures. You can stroll by such sites as Rockefeller Center, Saks, the Plaza, the Flatiron Building, and Canal Street; you can also walk *through* a life-size re-creation of a New York City bus, made of painted vinyl, nylon, rubber, aluminum, and more. Through Nov. 25. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Duncan Hannah—Oils by a Minnesota-born artist obsessed with the idyll of English youth in the postwar years. Some of the paintings, straightforwardly executed in flat washes, resemble illustrations for boys' magazines of the early nineteen-fifties; others have a more sinister edge. "Shirts and Skins," a large canvas of youngsters frolicking fleshily in a sylvan glade, is as close to prurience as to A. E. Housman; "A Girl in Winter," tightly buttoned up in her gray wool coat, stares forlornly at the viewer, lost and fearing never to be found. Through Nov. 11. (De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St.)

Annette Lemieux—This conceptual artist makes objects in many different media which seem to arise from wildly divergent sensibilities, creating the effect of a rather ill-assorted group show: blurry color photographs of taxi and train interiors from the passengers' point of view; massive black shingle-covered slabs on aluminum casters; bricks fitted with tiny wheels, like children's toys; uninflected paintings of brick walls. Handsome and impenetrable. Through Nov. 16. (McKee, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

David Salle—The large works in "Tragedy, Comedy & Other New Paintings" are based on photographs the artist made with a handful of actors and friends who form an ad-hoc commedia dell'arte troupe. Through Dec. 2. (Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

Short List—**hannelore baron,** Mathes, 41 E. 57th St. Through Dec. 29. . . . **ana mercedes hoyos,** Associated American Artists, 20 W. 57th St. Through Dec. 7. . . . **grace knowlton,** Hirschl & Adler Modern, 21 E. 70th St. Through Nov. 4. . . . **ida lorentzen,** Babcock, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through Nov. 11. . . . **christopher lucas,** Baldacci, 41 E. 57th St. Through Nov. 11. . . . **john marin,** Kennedy, 730 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through Nov. 4. . . . **yoko ono,** Ubu, 16 E. 78th St. Through Dec. 13. . . . **faith ringgold,** ACA, 41 E. 57th St. Through Nov. 4. . . . **kenny scharf,** Yoshii, 20 W. 57th St. Through Dec. 2. . . . **francisca sutil** and **sophia vari,** Haime, 41 E. 57th St. Open Mondays; through Nov. 18.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

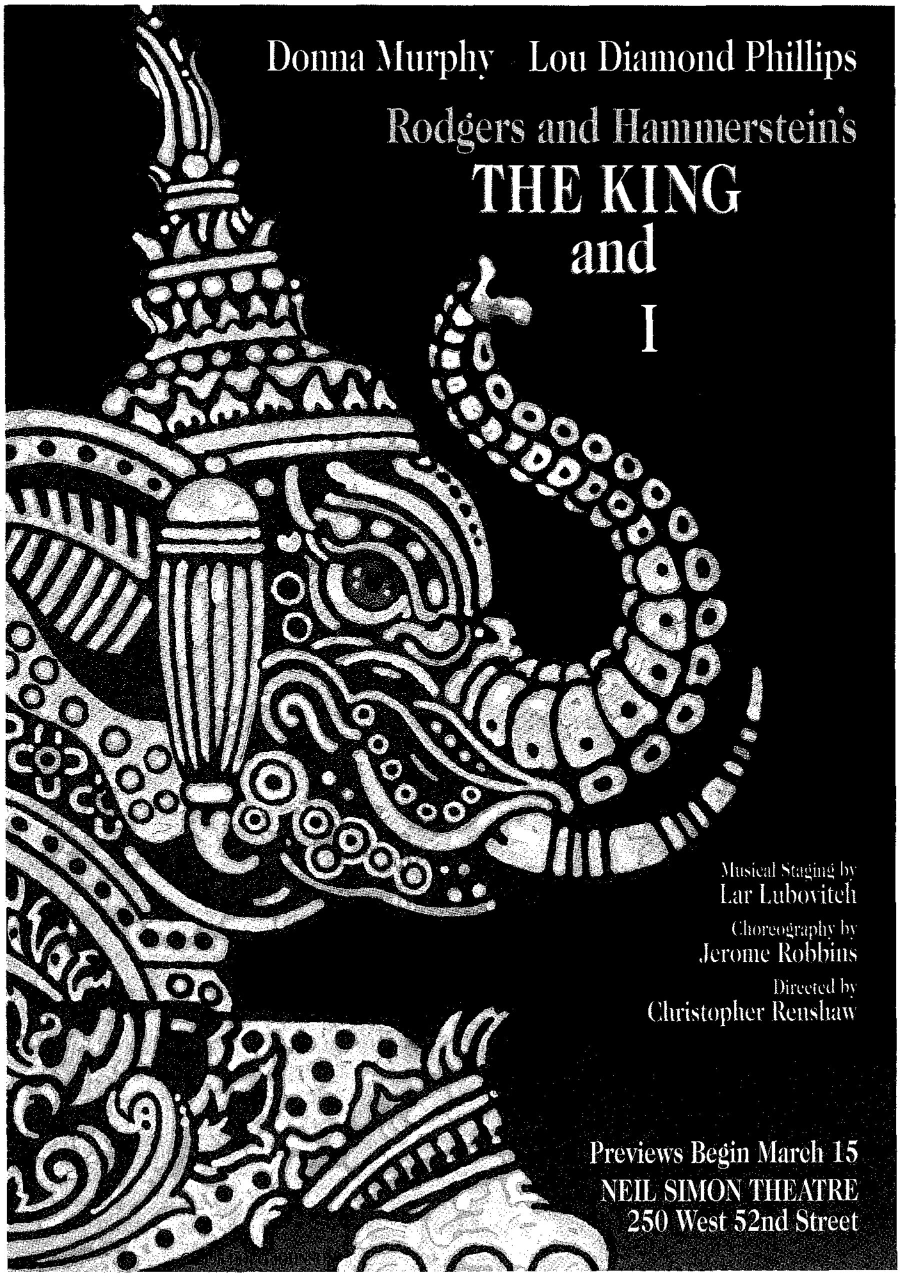
Guillermo Kuitca—"Puro Teatro," paintings that depict theatre seating plans from the point of view of the stages. Through Dec. 22. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.)

Brice Marden—A large group of new paintings and drawings by a first-rank abstractionist; their effect in this museumlike space is quite impressive. Marden has abandoned the vestigial grid structure he had borrowed from Chinese calligraphy for the "Cold Mountain" series exhibited at Dia in 1991. His lines, thicker and lusher than ever, swell and buckle in an amorphous space; whereas previously they had kept clear of the edges, now they seem to cling to the perimeter as if seeking refuge from an unstructured picture plane. As fluidly graceful as these paintings are, they look somehow transitional—one eagerly awaits Marden's next step. Through Jan. 14. (Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. Open Thursdays through Sundays, noon to 6.)

Barry Ratoff—Sculptures-cum-lamps and faint pencil drawings that feature such saccharine motifs as clovers and smiley faces. The illuminated sculptures—many in the form of daisies that look not unlike bathtub decals—suggest the minimalism of Dan Flavin filtered through the sensibility of Jane and Michael Stern's "Encyclopedia of Bad Taste." Through Nov. 8. (Morris Healy, 530 W. 22nd St. Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6.)

"Love Flight of a Pink Candy Heart: A Compliment to Florine Stettheimer"—Curated by Michael Duncan in response to the Whitney's Stettheimer retrospective, this intelligent and imaginative group show assembles paintings, sculptures, and photographs that enlarge upon Stettheimer's insouciant aesthetic of gauze and gewgaws. The show includes some older works (three Stettheimers, a small Tchelichew, a Cornell box, and, most remarkably, a videotape of Jack Smith's 1963 drag opus, "Flaming Creatures"), but the bulk of the work is contemporary: Jane Kaplowitz, Thomas Lanigan-Schmidt, Izhar Patkin, and others. Through Nov. 4. (Holly Solomon, 172 Mercer St.)

Short List—**jim anderson,** Feldman, 31 Mercer St. Through Nov. 25. . . . **donald baechler,** Kasmin, 74 Grand St. Through Nov. 25. . . . **radcliffe bailey,** Beitzel, 102 Prince St. Through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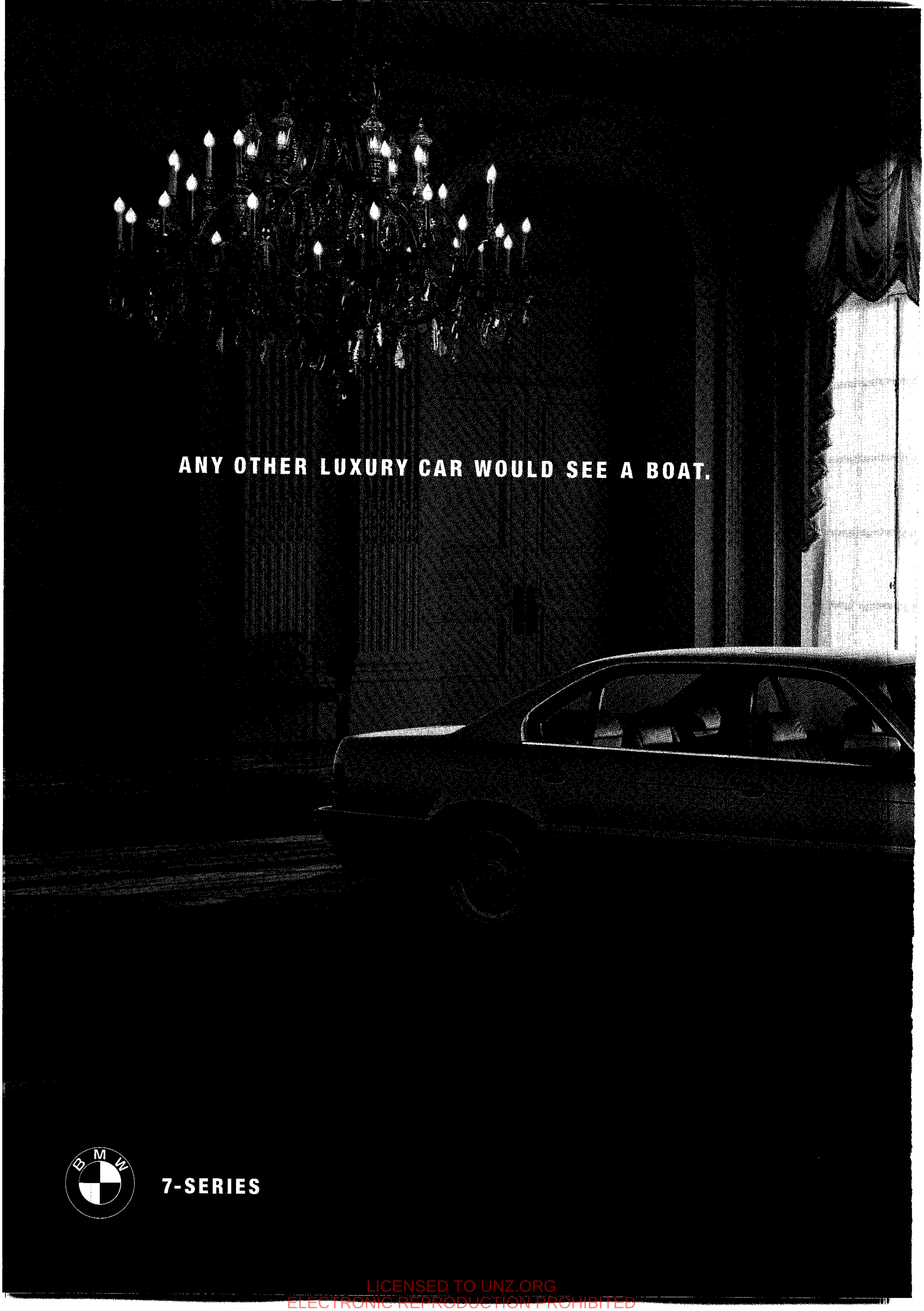
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Nov. 11. . . . **JOHN CURRIN,** Rosen, 130 Prince St. Through Nov. 25. . . . **DREW DOMINICK,** Freire, 580 Broadway. Through Nov. 11. . . . **MICHAEL FLANAGAN,** P.P.O.W, 532 Broadway. Through Nov. 11. . . . **ROBERT GUILLOT,** Shainman, 560 Broadway. Through Nov. 11. . . . **MARY HEILMANN,** Hearn, 530 W. 22nd St. Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6; through Dec. 10. . . . **MIKE KELLEY,** Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St. Through Nov. 25. . . . **MEL KENDRICK** and **KIM JONES,** Weber, 142 Greene St. Through Nov. 18. . . . **JULIAN LETHBRIDGE,** Cooper, 155 Wooster St. Through Nov. 25. . . . **LYNN MC CARTY,** Hoffman, 429 West Broadway. Through Nov. 29. . . . **ANNE AND PATRICK POIRIER,** Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway. Through Nov. 11. . . . **HARVEY QUAYTMAN,** Room, 25 Thompson St. Through Nov. 11. . . . **JAMES STIVENDER,** Klein, 40 Wooster St. Through Nov. 15.

OTHER VENUES

"ROBERT MOSES AND THE SHAPING OF NEW YORK"—Even Moses's mother might have found this exhibition a bit over-the-top: its presentation of the man responsible for most of New York City's important twentieth-century public works is unabashed, undiluted hagiography. Still, it's well mounted, with neat architectural models, and with park benches and beach chairs that bring the era alive (though it could have done without quite so many silver trowels and bronze medals). A photograph of Moses laying the cornerstone of the Coliseum is displayed as though this were one of his great moments. His defiant (or was it defensive?) credo—"Those who can, build. Those who can't, criticize"—is inscribed at the entrance, a rather strange sentiment for curators to be endorsing. Through Dec. 8. (PaineWebber Building, Sixth Ave. at 52nd St. Open Mondays through Fridays, 8 to 6.)

AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

CHRISTIE'S—Nov. 1: Fifteen paintings by the turn-of-the-century portraitist Giovanni Boldini, all from the collection of the late Baron Maurice de Rothschild. Nov. 7: The fall sale of Impressionist and modern drawings, paintings, and sculptures opens with estimable works by Matisse, Picasso, and Monet, among others. (Park Ave. at 59th St. 546-1119.)

PHILATELY ALERT—The Honolulu Advertiser Collection of exceptional Hawaiian stamps will be auctioned by the Robert A. Siegel Galleries. (65 E. 55th St. 753-6421. Nov. 7-11.)

SWANN GALLERIES—An auction of early printed books. (104 E. 25th St. 254-4710. Nov. 2.)

METROPOLITAN ANTIQUES—A show of vintage fashions and antique textiles. (110 W. 19th St. 463-0200. Nov. 3-5.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

MERRY ALPERN—"Dirty Windows," a series of photos that the artist took from one window looking into another—the other being the bathroom window of an illegal financial-district sex club. Through Nov. 25. (Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St.)

DAVID BYRNE—Beautiful photographs of banal subjects—fluorescent lights, living-room chairs, airport signs—by an artist bent on finding life in the mundane. Through Nov. 22. (Cristinerose, 395 West Broadway.)

LEN JENSHEL AND DIANE COOK—Husband and wife: one works in color, the other in black-and-white. You'd expect fireworks, but volcanoes? The pair has toured the country for the past four years and has come back with surreal and sublime volcanic landscapes, from Craters of the Moon National Monument, in Idaho, to Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. Through Nov. 25. (Richardson, 560 Broadway.)

O. WINSTON LINK—Between 1955 and 1960, the artist, a train enthusiast and a commercial industrial photographer, made twenty-two hundred pictures of the last steam trains (along with depots and townsfolk) of the Norfolk and Western Railway, usually lit with complex banks of high-key flashes (many are night views). Link merged historical documentation with a highly personal—and sentimental—aesthetic, but his best pictures are dignified and restrained. Through Dec. 16. (Mann, 42 E. 76th St. . . . ¶ Link's little-known color photographs of the same subjects are on view, for the first time, at Danziger, 130 Prince St., through Dec. 2.)

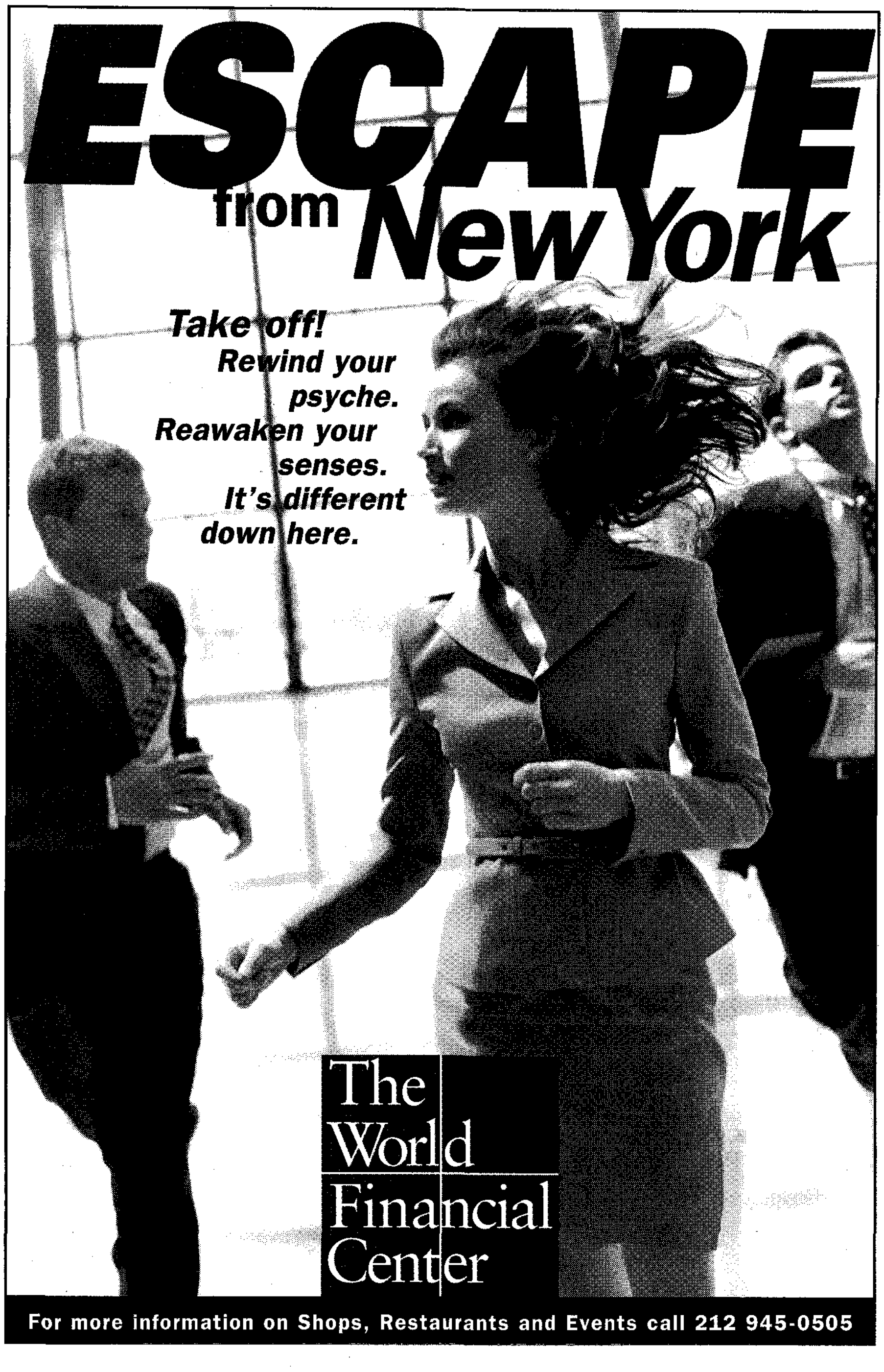
SALLY MANN—Recent photographs of the artist's family, in which the rural Virginia landscape assumes a prominent role. Through Nov. 4. (Houk Friedman, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

TINA MODOTTI (1896-1942)—Street photographs, still-lifes with puppets, and other works made in Mexico between 1923 and 1929, which reveal a unique marriage of political consciousness and formalist aesthetics. Through Nov. 4. (Throckmorton, 153 E. 61st St.)

GROUP SHOW—A selection of works from Joel Meyerowitz (views of Cape Cod), Richard Schulman (artist portraits), and Eve Sonneman (large Polaroids). Through Nov. 4. (Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

SHORT LIST—**ANSEL ADAMS,** Danziger, 130 Prince St. Through Dec. 2. . . . **EUGÈNE ATGET** and **WALKER EVANS,** Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through Nov. 25. . . . **SARAH CHARLESWORTH,** Gorney, 100 Greene St. Through Nov. 25. . . . **IMOGEN CUNNINGHAM,** Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. Through Nov. 4. . . . **PATRICK DEMARCHELIER,** Shafrazi, 119 Wooster St. Through Dec. 2. . . . **CARLO MOLLINO,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. Through Nov. 25. . . . **BILLY NAME,** Gavin Brown, 558 Broome St. Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6. Through Nov. 11. . . . **JOHN O'REILLY,** Saul, 560 Broadway. Through Nov. 25. . . . **LORNA SIMPSON,** Sean Kelly, 43 Mercer St. Through Nov. 11. . . . **WILLIAM WEGMAN** and **MARK KLETT,** Pace Wildenstein MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. Through Nov. 18.

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, the Guggenheim Museum, and the Guggenheim Museum SoHo.)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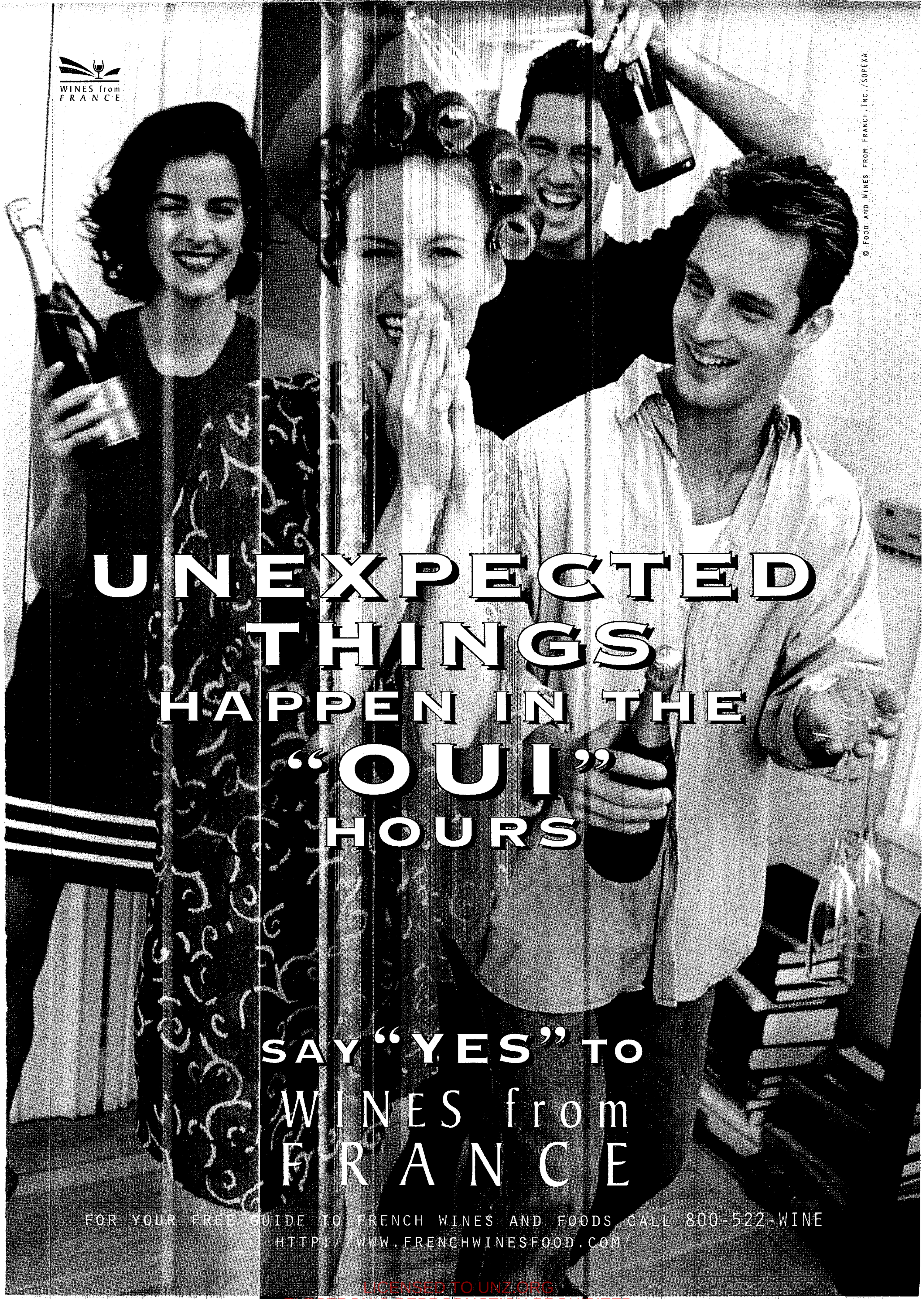
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CLASSICAL MUSIC

Quietly Teeming

THE music of the Estonian composer Arvo Pärt tends to divide listeners into opposing camps. One side writes it off for lacking rhythmic vitality, harmonic complexity, timbral variety. The other loves spacing out to his numbingly slow meditations; and some of his defenders have concluded, through analysis or intuition, that Pärt's music is far less simple than it sounds. On November 2, at Alice Tully Hall, the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir and the Tallinn Chamber Orchestra will perform Pärt's Magnificat and "Collage on B–A–C–H," as well as the New York première of his Te Deum. Neither work asks too much of a listener—they're aural pillows that you can sink into. But if you pay careful attention, you may notice a lot happening in those great open spaces; imagine staring into a still, muddy streambed and suddenly realizing that it's teeming with tiny creatures.

(The box-office number for Alice Tully Hall is 875-5050, and for Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall, 247-7800.)

METROPOLITAN OPERA—**DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE,** with Tina Kiberg, Sally Wolf, Gösta Winbergh, Mikael Melbye, and Robert Lloyd; conducted by Peter Schneider. (Nov. 1 and Nov. 6 at 8.) . . . **CARMEN,** with Barbara Frittoli, Sally Burgess, Sergej Larin, and Barseg Tumanyan; John Fiore. (Nov. 2 at 8.) . . . **THE QUEEN OF SPADES,** by Tchaikovsky, with Karita Mattila, Birgitta Svendén, Leonie Rysanek, Ben Heppner, Peter Kazaras, Nikolai Putilin, and Dmitri Hvorostovsky; Valery Gergiev. (Nov. 3 and Nov. 7 at 8.) . . . **AIDA,** with Andrea Gruber, Barbara Dever, Michael Sylvester, and Sherrill Milnes; Christian Badea. (Nov. 4 at 1:30.) . . . **LA FILLE DU RÉGIMENT,** with June Anderson, Sarah Walker, Muriel Costa-Greenspon, Luciano Pavarotti, and Michel Trempont; Edoardo Müller. (Nov. 4 at 8.) (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

NEW YORK CITY OPERA—**TURANDOT.** (Nov. 1 at 8 and Nov. 7 at 6:30.) . . . **LA BOHÈME.** (Nov. 2 at 8 and Nov. 5 at 1:30.) . . . **KINKAKUJI,** with music by Toshiro Mayuzumi and libretto by Claus Henneberg, after Mishima's novel "The Temple of the Golden Pavilion." (Nov. 3 at 8.) . . . **THE MAGIC FLUTE,** performed in English. (Nov. 4 at 1:30.) . . . **THE MIKADO.** (Nov. 4 at 8.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC—Christian Thielemann conducts de Falla's "Nights in the Gardens of Spain" and Turina's "Rapsodia Sinfónica" (both featuring pianist Alicia de Larrocha), as well as Schumann's Symphony No. 2. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. Nov. 2 and Nov. 4 at 8; Nov. 3 at 11 A.M.; and Nov. 7 at 7:30.)

ESTONIAN SOUNDS—The Tallinn Chamber Orchestra and the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir perform three works by Arvo Pärt (his Te Deum, Magnificat, and "Collage on B–A–C–H"), as well as Bach's motet "Singet dem Herrn." Tõnu Kaljuste directs. (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 2 at 8.)

BROOKLYN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA—A talk-and-play weekend at the Brooklyn Academy of Music focusses on African-American music between the world wars. Nov. 3-4 at 8: Gunther Schuller conducts works by Joplin, William Grant Still, and Gershwin. . . . **NOTE:** Judith Anne Still, the composer's daughter, offers a slide presentation on both nights at 7. . . . ¶ Nov. 5 at 2: Pianist Steven Mayer performs transcriptions of virtuosic improvisations by Art Tatum and others. . . . At 3:30: Mr. Schuller leads a jazz orchestra in music by Ellington. (30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100.)

A WEEKEND OF BARTÓK—Last summer the Bard Music Festival explored the life and works of Bartók, who died fifty years ago; now it reconvenes with a revised and condensed version of that forum. Nov. 4 at 2: A roundtable discussion of Bartók's years in America. . . . At 3: Piano and chamber music, with pianists Cynthia Raim and Anton Nel. . . . At 7: A lecture on the composer's contemporaries. . . . At 8: Leon Botstein conducts the American Symphony Orchestra in Bartók's revision of his Second Orchestral Suite, as well as in music by his Hungarian predecessors Ferenc Erkel, Ödön von Mihalovich, and Ernö von Dohnányi (his Symphony No. 1). . . . ¶ Nov. 5 at 1: A panel discussion on nationalism and folk music. . . . At 2: A performance by the Jánosi Ensemble, from Budapest. . . . At 5: Mr. Botstein conducts the American Symphony Orchestra in Bartók's "Three Village Scenes" (for female voices and orchestra), Viola Concerto (featuring Paul Neubauer), and "The Wooden Prince." (Alice Tully Hall.)

BOLSHOI SYMPHONY—Peter Feranec conducts Wagner's "Tannhäuser" Overture, Brahms's Piano Concerto No. 1 (with Boris Berezovsky), and Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 4. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. Nov. 6 at 7:30.)

PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA—Franz Welser-Möst conducts Sibelius's "Finlandia"; Giya Kancheli's "Lament ('Music of Mourning in Memory of Luigi Nono')," with violinist Gidon Kremer and soprano Maacha Deubner; and Dvořák's Symphony No. 7. (Carnegie Hall. Nov. 7 at 8.)

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RECITALS

Gidon Kremer and Vadim Sakharov—The violinist and the pianist collaborate on a concert that comprises unaccompanied works by Bach and Ysaÿe, Debussy's "Feux d'Artifice," sonatas by Prokofiev (his Second) and Janáček, Pärt's "Fratres II," and two tangos by Piazzolla. (Carnegie Hall. Nov. 1 at 8.)

Guarneri and Orion String Quartets—Members of the two ensembles join to play Mozart's C-Major Quintet (K. 515), Shostakovich's Prelude and Scherzo (Op. 11, for octet), and Dvořák's A-Major Sextet (Op. 48). (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. Nov. 1 at 8.)

Beaux Arts Trio—The ensemble plays three piano trios by Beethoven: his Third, his Fourth (the "Ghost"), and his Sixth (the "Archduke"). (Carnegie Hall. Nov. 2 at 8.)

Henri Barda—The pianist, born in Cairo and educated in Paris and New York, has garnered the respect of those who watch the less ballyhooed corners of the piano world. In his United States début recital, he'll perform a passel of Ravel and Chopin. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Nov. 2 at 8.)

Sonic Boom Festival—At the Miller Theatre, Columbia University. Nov. 3 at 8: The annual showcase of New York's "establishment" contemporary-music ensembles opens with all five participating groups showing off their specialities. On the roster are Continuum (offering music by Paul Schoenfield and Toshiro Mayuzumi), the Da Capo Chamber Players (performing a Joan Tower piece), the New York New Music Ensemble (with a Harvey Sollberger première), Newband (playing music by Dean Drummond), and Speculum Musicae (in Henry Brant's "Prevailing Winds"). . . . ¶ Nov. 6 at 8: The Da Capo Chamber Players, who celebrate their twenty-fifth anniversary this season, perform works by three other milestone-birthday celebrants: Boulez (now seventy), George Perle (eighty), and Louise Talma (ninety). (Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799.)

Music by Arvo Pärt, at Alice Tully Hall.

DAVID TOMB

Many Strings Attached—This week and next, ARTEK, the period-instrument ensemble led by keyboard player Gwendolyn Toth, performs the first of three concerts focussing on the music of Monteverdi and his Italian contemporaries. In this installment, the group's continuo ensemble performs "458 Strings," which seems to be an accurate (and, one supposes, time-consuming) count of the strings *vibrating on their lutes, harpsichords,* and bowed instruments. Following intermission, the players will concentrate on eighteenth-century works—by Handel, Bach, and Rameau—that show strong Italian influence. (St. Michael's Church, Amsterdam Ave. at 99th St. Nov. 4 at 8. For information about tickets, call 873-0473. The remaining concerts will take place on Nov. 10-11.)

Barbara Hendricks—The soprano offers a recital of songs by Schubert, Wolf (his "Möricke Lieder"), Poulenc ("Fiançailles pour Rire"), and Schoenberg ("Brettl-Lieder"); with pianist Roland Pöntinen. (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 6 at 7:30.)

ALSO OF INTEREST

CHRISTOPH PRÉGARDIEN: Tenor, in an all-Schubert program. (Weill Recital Hall. Nov. 3 at 8.) . . . **ORCHESTRA OF ST. LUKE'S:** Bernhard Klee leads selections from Schubert's incidental music to "Rosamunde" and his "Unfinished" Symphony; soprano Barbara Hendricks sings arias by Mozart. (Carnegie Hall. Nov. 4 at 8.) . . . **NEW YORK CHAMBER SYMPHONY:** Gerard Schwarz conducts works by Fauré, Ravel (his Piano Concerto in G Major, with Hélène Grimaud), Deems Taylor, and Poulenc. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. Nov. 4 at 8 and Nov. 7 at 7:30.) . . . **ARVE TELLEFSEN:** Violinist, playing music by Grieg, Brahms, Ravel, and Arne Nordheim. (Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St. 288-0700. Nov. 5 at 5.) . . . **CAPRICCIO STRAVAGANTE:** Harpsichordist Skip Sempé leads his ensemble in an hour-long concert of late-Renaissance and early-Baroque music. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Nov. 6 at 7.)

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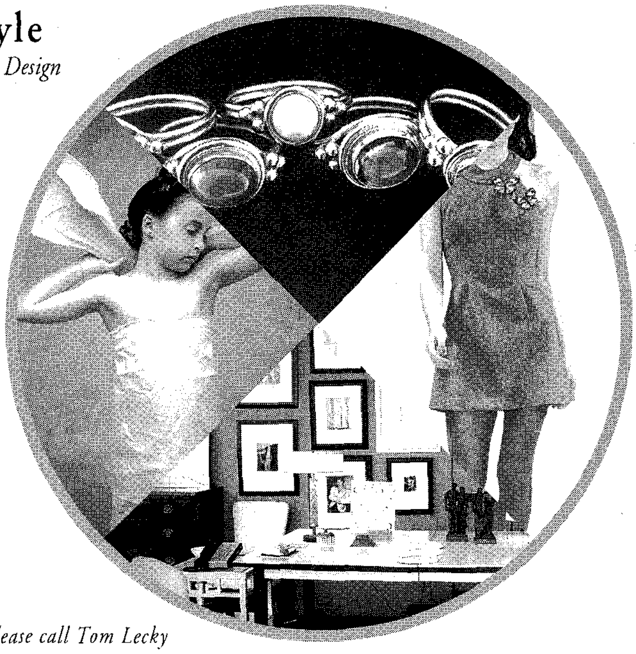

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WHY? BECAUSE WE LOVE YOU—To celebrate the mysteriously cheerful Día de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead, Mexicans strew fruit, photographs, flowers, family ephemera, candy skulls, tissue-paper skeletons, and candles on altars they set up at home. In the same spirit, partygoers at El Museo del Barrio will invoke their departed at the museum's community altar. Explosión Norteña will provide ranchero music; Miguel Cossio will snip away at tissue paper in a workshop on fashioning skeleton silhouettes. (Fifth Ave. at 104th St. Nov. 1 at 6. For more information, call 831-7272, ext. 15. Museumgoers may add their own mementos to the museum's altar through Dec. 22.) . . . ¶ Nov. 3 at 7: Mickey, Goofy, Cenicienta (Cinderella), and La Pequeña Sirena (the Little Mermaid) take to the ice at a Spanish-language performance of Walt Disney's World on Ice. (Madison Square Garden. For tickets, or for information about English-language performances on Nov. 1-5, call 307-7171.)

READINGS—Nov. 1 at 7: Grace Paley, Blanche Wiesen Cook, Ynestra King, and Sky Vanderlinde read from "Prisons That Could Not Hold," a memoir by pacifist-activist Barbara Deming. (A Different Light Bookstore, 151 W. 19th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Nov. 1 at 8: Poets Robyn Selman and Susan Wheeler read from their first collections, "Directions to My House" and "Bag 'o' Diamonds," respectively. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. Tickets at the door on the evening of the reading.) . . . ¶ Nov. 4 at 2: Poets Ed Hirsch, Sapphire, Grace Schulman, and Charles Simic read poems they have written about New York City. (Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave. at 104th St. No charge beyond museum admission.) . . . ¶ Nov. 6 at 8: Six reading series chip in to celebrate the ninetieth birthday of poet Stanley Kunitz, who will read from his work and receive accolades from Richard Wilbur, Philip Levine, and Marie Howe. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100.)

TALKS—Nov. 2 at 6:30: Jazz historian Frank Driggs plays rare recordings from the early days of swing in Kansas City, St. Louis, and the rural Southwest. (Kaplan Penthouse, Rose Building, Lincoln Center. 875-5050.) . . . ¶ Nov. 5 at 3: Susan Sontag talks with abstract colorist Howard Hodgkin. (Museum of Modern Art Auditorium, 11 W. 53rd St. For information, call 570-3932.) . . . ¶ Nov. 7 at 6:30: Architect Michael Graves, who in 1991 adorned the Team Disney building in Burbank, California, with seven nineteen-foot-tall dwarves, pleads the case for figurative architecture. (Urban Center Books, 457 Madison Ave., at 50th St. 935-3595.)

TOUR—Nov. 5 at 1: Illustrator Elisha Cooper, who turned his sketch-pad diary into the 1995 book "A Year in New York," heads a quick-draw safari to city landmarks. For more information, call the New-York Historical Society at 873-3400.

SPORTS

OPENING ARGUMENTS—The Knicks' postseason (how the hell did Ewing's final finger roll against the Pacers fail to go down?) was straight out of the Yanks' playbook: accusations, sanctions (the Heat took the heat), coaches coming, coaches going. When the secondhand smoke in Pat Riley's office finally cleared, he was head coach (and part owner) of the Miami Heat, and Don Nelson was in place in New York. Not only will Armani and hair grease give way to that slept-in look and a boyish lock flopping over the forehead, the team's style is likely to undergo a transformation, too—more up-tempo, with a wider player rotation. Look out for Chicago: Jordan is a full-timer again, and Rodman is on board for rebounding, enforcement, and plain wackiness. (The Knickerbockers play the Phoenix Suns at their Garden opener, Nov. 7 at 8. For more information, call 465-5867.)

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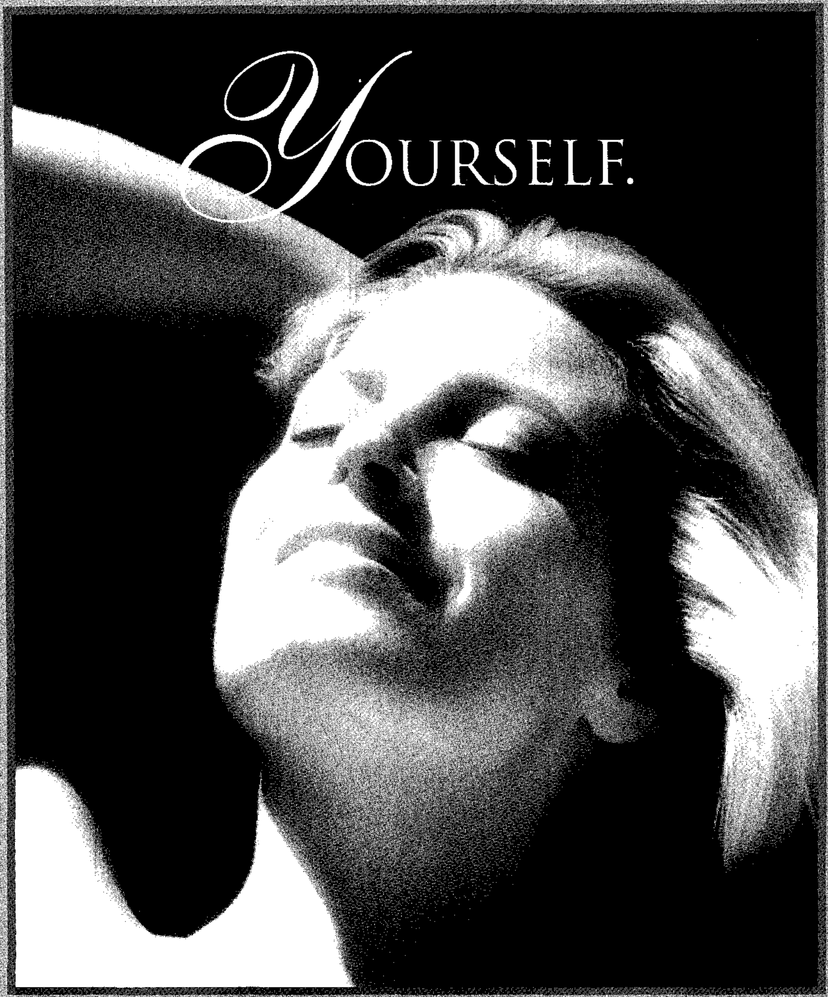

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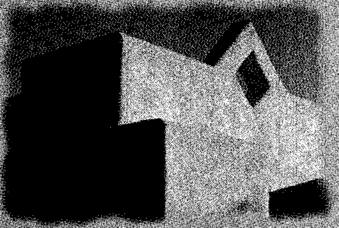

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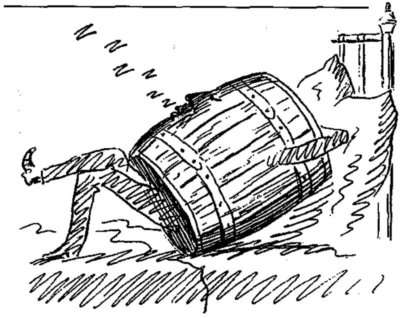

A FRUGAL AND ANONYMOUS SCOT, LONG YEARS AGO, observed that the oaken casks which had been used for bringing sherry, port, or madeira into the country, might be employed thereafter to *mature malt whisky*.

A PRIME NOTION IT TURNED OUT TO BE. The casks (particularly those that had contained sherry) imparted both a lustrous golden colour and a beguiling hint of redolence to the malt.

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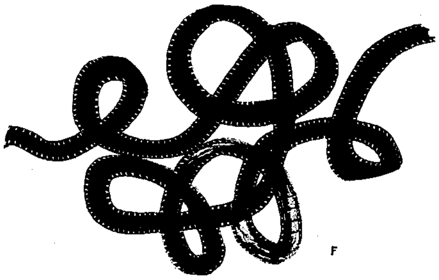
THE MOVIES



FILMS OPENING THIS WEEK

A Business Affair—A romantic comedy in which an aspiring writer and floor model at Harrod's (Carole Bouquet) who is married to a celebrated novelist (Jonathan Pryce) falls in love with her husband's new publisher (Christopher Walken). Directed by Charlotte Brandstrom. Screenplay by William Stadiem. Opening November 3. (Quad Cinema.)

Fair Game—William Baldwin and Cindy Crawford star as a Miami police detective and the lawyer he is assigned to protect from a gang of homicidal bank robbers, in a thriller directed by Andrew Sipes and written by Charlie Fletcher. Opening November 3. (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, First & 62nd Cinemas, Orpheum VII, 84th Street Sixplex, and National Twin.)

Gold Diggers: The Secret of Bear Mountain—In which two thirteen-year-old girls (Christina Ricci and Anna Chlumsky) go looking for gold near their small Pacific Northwest town. Directed by Kevin James Dobson. Written by Barry Glasser. Opening November 3. (Village Theatre VII, 59th Street East Cinema, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, 62nd & Broadway, and National Twin.)

Home for the Holidays—Jodie Foster directed this comedy-drama about family relations during the Thanksgiving weekend. With Holly Hunter, Anne Bancroft, Charles Durning, and Robert Downey, Jr. Written by W. D. Richter. Opening November 3. (19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, Tower East, Orpheum VII, Waverly, Guild, and Lincoln Square.)

The Kingdom—A four-and-a-half-hour drama (originally made for Danish television) about the strange staff of a haunted hospital in Copenhagen. Directed by Lars von Trier, who co-wrote the screenplay with Niels Vørsel. In Danish and Swedish. Opening November 3. (Angelika 57.)

Maya Lin: A Strong Clear Vision—Freida Lee Mock's documentary portrait of the architect whose works include the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, in Washington, D.C., and the Civil Rights Memorial, in Montgomery, Alabama. Opening November 3. (Quad Cinema.)

Nobody Loves Me—Writer-director Doris Dörrie's romantic comedy concerns a lonely twenty-nine-year-old airport security guard (Maria Schrader) who befriends a psychic (Pierre Sanoussi-Bliss). In German. Opening November 3. (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

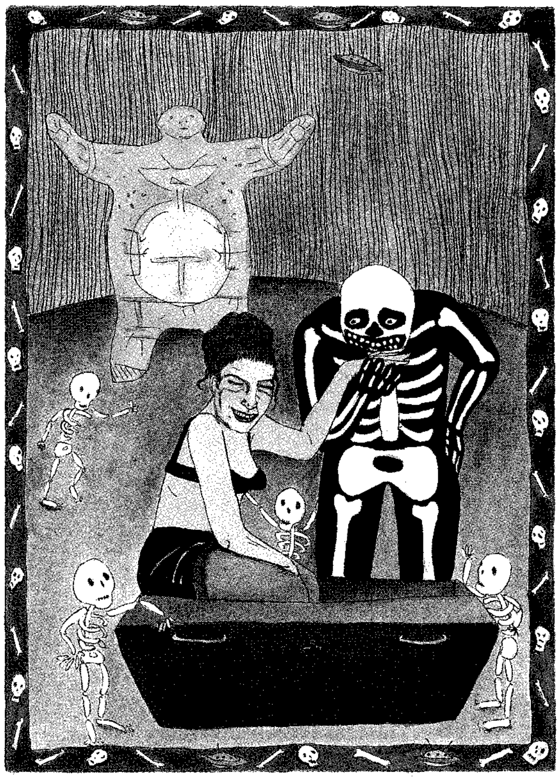
The November Men—A black comedy directed by Paul Williams, who also stars as an independent filmmaker shooting a movie about a presidential assassination. Screenplay by James Andronica. Opening November 3. (Quad Cinema.)

Total Eclipse—The relationship of Arthur Rimbaud (Leonardo DiCaprio) and Paul Verlaine (David Thewlis), as envisioned by Christopher Hampton, first as a play, now as a film, and directed by Agnieszka Holland. With Romane Bohringer. Opening November 3. (Village Theatre VII.)

CURRENT FILMS

(The signed notes are by Bruce Diones, Sarah Kerr, Anthony Lane, and Terrence Rafferty. If a movie has been reviewed in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given. Theatre information is listed on page 54.)

Blue in the Face—Wayne Wang and Paul Auster's low-budget movie presents itself as a loosely organized sketchbook of neighborhood life in Brooklyn—a collection of doodles in the margins of "Smoke" (which Auster wrote and Wang directed). One of the earlier film's stars, Harvey Keitel, and several of its supporting actors play improvised skits with a bunch of celebrity drop-ins, among them Michael J. Fox, Lily Tomlin, Jim Jarmusch, Roseanne, and Madonna. The movie also includes interview footage, little documentary essays on Brooklyn lore, and a musical number or two—oddball stuff that the filmmakers combine with the salvageable fragments of improvisation in a deliberately messy, random-seeming assemblage. The pointlessness would be vastly more appealing if Wang and Auster didn't make such a point of it. Also with Lou Reed, who—playing himself and speaking directly to the camera—is the weirdest, funniest character on the screen.—T.R. (10/23/95) (Angelika Film Center, Sutton, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)


Opening November 3, Maria Schrader and Pierre Sanoussi-Bliss in "Nobody Loves Me."

LARA TOMLIN

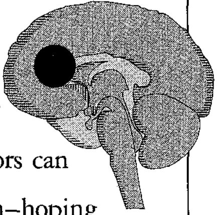
Copycat—A San Francisco police detective (Holly Hunter) turns to an agoraphobic criminal psychologist (Sigourney Weaver) for help in solving a string of murders, in a thriller directed by Jon Amiel. Written by Ann Biderman and David Madsen. (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Olympia, and Criterion Center.)

Dead Presidents—Albert and Allen Hughes's new picture—about a young black man's journey from the Bronx to Vietnam and back again—

ONCE A STROKE OCCURS, THE DAMAGE IS DONE. DOES IT HAVE TO BE?

New medicines currently being tested may be able to stop destruction of brain cells in the crucial hours after a stroke.

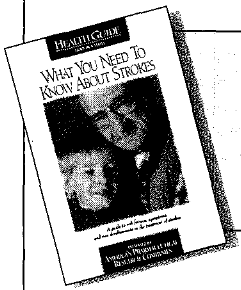
Scientists from pharmaceutical research companies discover more than 9 out of 10 new drugs.



When a person suffers a stroke, reduced blood flow damages part of the brain. Then a powerful chain of chemical reactions occurs. Called the *glutamate cascade*, it rains terrible destruction down on brain cells in the initial days after a stroke, causing further damage. As glutamate levels build, excess calcium and a toxic form of oxygen destroy brain cells. Today, doctors can only stand by and watch–hoping that the cascade will end before massive damage occurs. But there is hope. Pharmaceutical company researchers are currently developing 19 new drugs that could help reduce the terrible damage to the brain that occurs after a stroke.

prevention

Anyone can have a stroke. But age, gender, race and medical history play a role. Some people also experience the following warning signs: temporary weakness or numbness on one side of the body, blurry or dim vision in one eye, a sudden, severe headache, or speech difficulty. Seek immediate medical help if you have any of these symptoms. Fortunately, there are things that you can do to reduce your risk of a stroke: Quit smoking • Exercise regularly • Maintain a low cholesterol diet • Limit alcohol.



For a free copy of "What You Need To Know About Strokes," please call us toll-free: 1-800-862-5110
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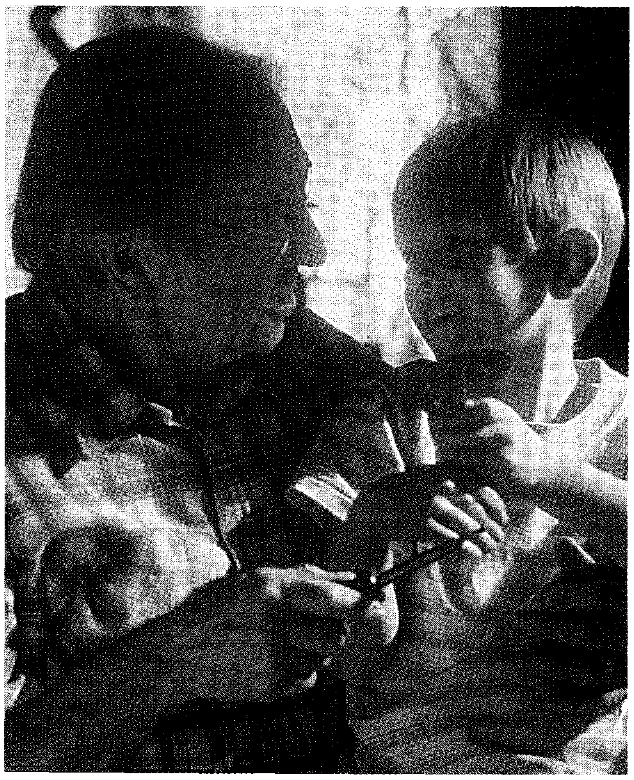
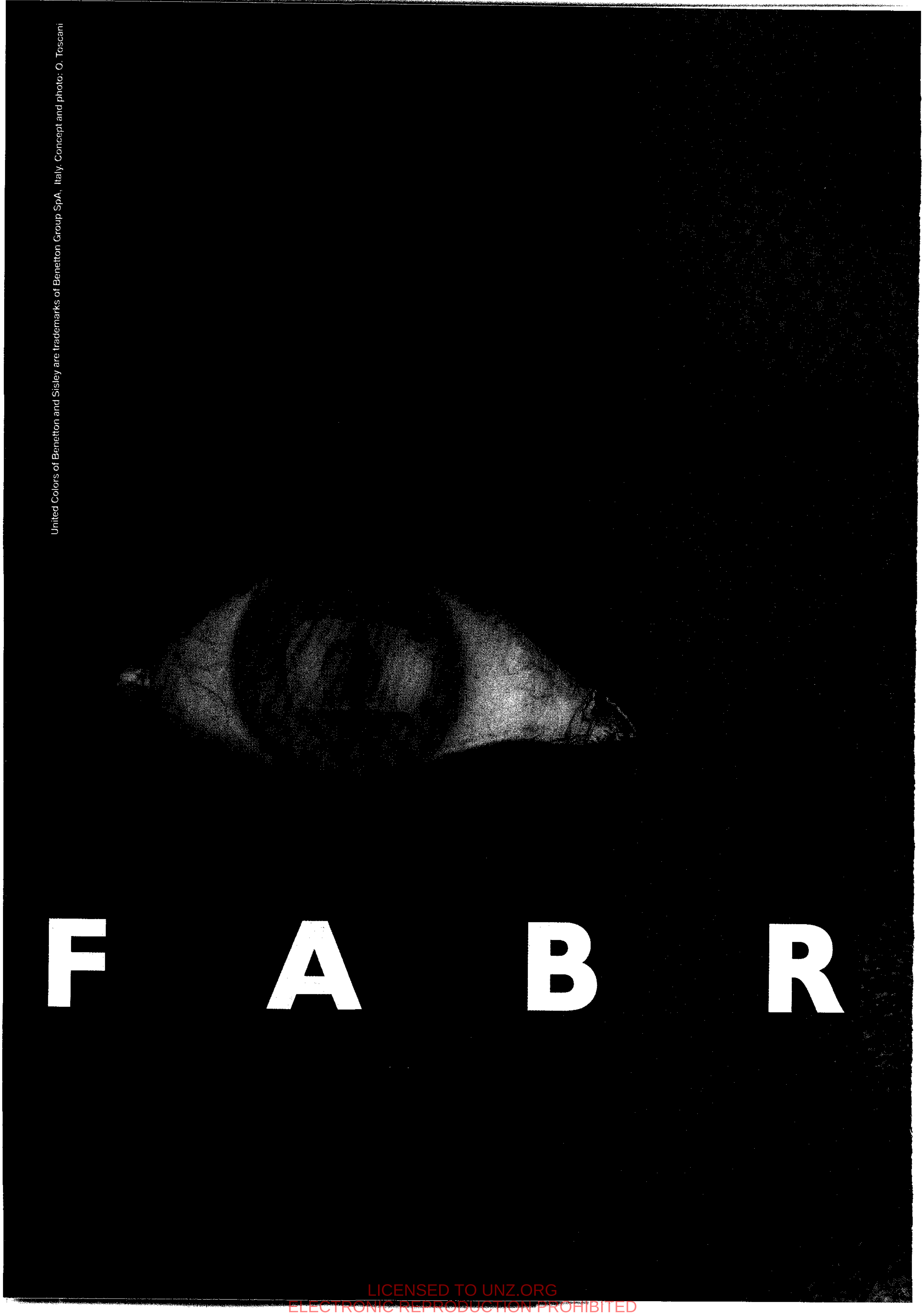


America's Pharmaceutical Research Companies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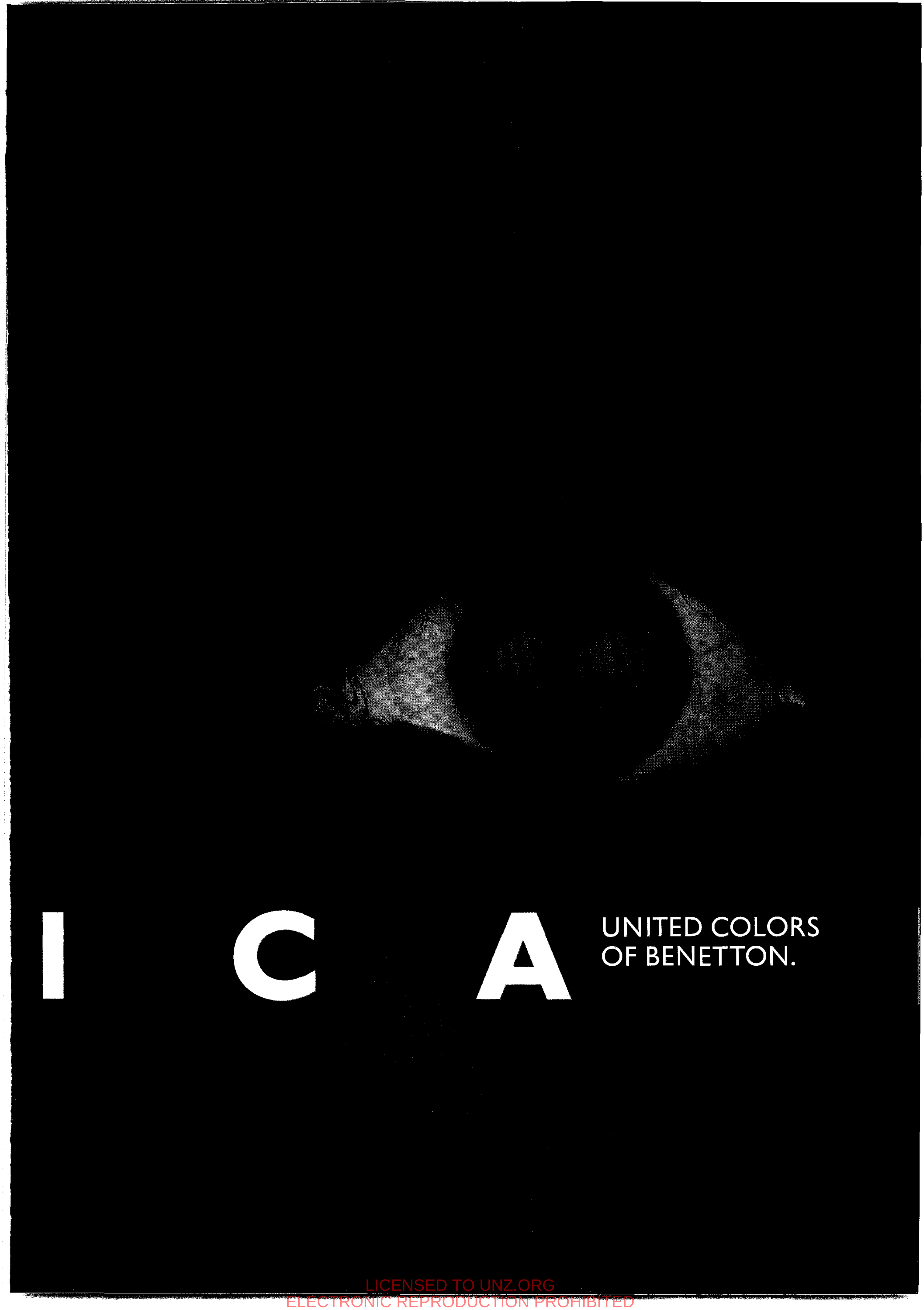
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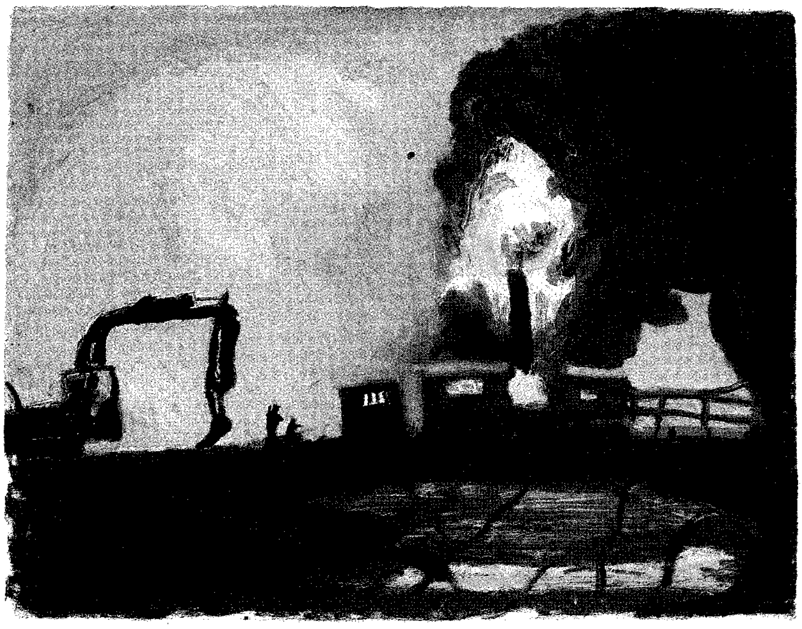
is an ambitious misfire. In the early scenes, which introduce the main character (Larenz Tate) and his friends and family, the Hugheses find a natural humor and a soulful rhythm. Then the friends ship off to Vietnam, are hardened there, return to an America that offers them little opportunity, and turn to crime. The filmmakers pull off some bravura sequences (the armored-car robbery at the end is spectacular), and they know how to build a scene with a Scorsese-like sweep. Tate, Keith David, and Bokeem Woodbine put a great deal of heart into their performances, but because the characters are little more than types, the film turns into one more indict-the-system polemic with little emotional pull.—B.D. (Village East Cinemas, Orpheum VII, 23rd St. West Triplex, 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy 4.)



At Film Forum 1, Werner Herzog's "Lessons of Darkness."

STEPHEN LACK

Devil in a Blue Dress—Denzel Washington plays Easy Rawlins, the hero of Walter Mosley's popular detective novels. The action takes place in 1948; Easy, an unemployed veteran, reluctantly agrees to help a shady-looking white man (Tom Sizemore) locate a woman who may be lying low in one of L.A.'s black neighborhoods. The movie, written and directed by Carl Franklin ("One False Move"), is the most enjoyable private-eye film in a long time: a modest, skillful, unfussy genre piece that tells an exciting story and lets its more serious concerns remain just below the surface. Also with Jennifer Beals and Don Cheadle (who does a virtuoso comic turn as Easy's homicidal sidekick, Mouse).—T.R. (10/2/95) (Gemini, Orpheum VII, Waverly, and 84th Street Sixplex. . . . ¶ National Twin; through Nov. 2.)

Get Shorty—John Travolta plays Chili Palmer, a small-time Miami loan shark who winds up in Hollywood, where he discovers his true métier and fulfills his destiny: he becomes a movie producer. Scott Frank's screenplay is based on an Elmore Leonard novel, and, wisely, it preserves the book's corkscrew plotting and lifts a fair amount of dialogue right off the page. The director, Barry Sonnenfeld, doesn't have the dexterity to trap the story's tiny, quick ironies; he works too strenuously for laughs. But Travolta's no-sweat acting—which deftly captures the dry comic tone of Leonard's prose—keeps the movie watchable. Just as Chili's unflappability enables him to outsmart the rich and the powerful, the star's sweet-natured assurance allows Travolta to survive the movie's overall hysteria. He wafts through the picture like a cool breeze in a climate of hot air. Also with Rene Russo, Gene Hackman, Danny DeVito, Delroy Lindo, and Dennis Farina.—T.R. (10/23/95) (Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, Coronet, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, and Criterion Center.)

How to Make an American Quilt—Winona Ryder plays Finn, a graduate student who spends the summer at the home of her grandmother (Ellen Burstyn) and her great-aunt (Anne Bancroft), interviewing members of a quilting circle for her thesis and deciding whether to marry her down-to-earth boyfriend. The characters represent possible paths of womanhood: there's a lonely widow (Kate Nelligan), a thwarted housewife (Lois Smith), a free spirit (Alfre Woodard)—everything but a lesbian. Saying that Ryder was born to play the self-conscious, narcissistic Finn is not exactly praise. Directed by Jocelyn Moorhouse ("Proof").—S.K. (34th St. East, Baronet, Orpheum VII, Art Greenwich Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, Lincoln Square, and Metro Cinema.)

Kicking and Screaming—Noah Baumbach's first movie focusses on the indecisive, enervated months that four college buddies spend together after graduation, before they go their separate ways. What finally makes them move on, and sets this film apart from other slacker comedies, is the women they're attracted to: risk-taking students who are more capable than their men of standing on their own. Baumbach doesn't write grand speeches; he lets details and repartee carry the movie's emotional weight. The picture has a lovely, understated autobiographical lilt. The perfect ensemble cast includes Josh Hamilton, Olivia d'Abo, Parker Posey, and the reigning king of independent-film ennui, Eric Stoltz.—B.D. (Angelika Film Center and Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

Leaving Las Vegas—Nicolas Cage plays an alcoholic and Elisabeth Shue the prostitute he moves in with, in a drama written and directed by Mike Figgis, from the 1990 novel by John O'Brien. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Village Theatre VII, Beekman, and Lincoln Square.)

Lessons of Darkness—Werner Herzog's documentary on the 1991 Gulf War. (Film Forum 1.)

Mallrats—Twenty-four-year-old Kevin Smith follows his début comedy, "Clerks," with a high-school-slacker-fantasy day at the mall in which two boys (Jeremy London and Jason Lee) scheme to win back the girlfriends (Claire Forlani and Shannen Doherty) who have dumped them. Once again Smith shows a talent for writing great circular rants about nothing. The plot is modelled on comic books

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(it includes a bald-headed villain and two goofball superheroes, and Stan Lee, the chairman of Marvel Comics, has a cameo), and it often hits an enjoyably anarchic pace, though Smith could go farther with the anarchy. These ninety-seven minutes of fecal humor and mean boob jokes seem less a satire than a complaint-filled anthem for boys who want to play Sega all day *and* get the cute girls.—S.K. (Village Theatre VII, First & 62nd Cinemas, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Lincoln Square.)

Mighty Aphrodite—Woody Allen stars in his latest picture as Lenny, a New York sportswriter bored by his wife (Helena Bonham Carter) and attracted to a hooker (Mira Sorvino) who happens to be the mother—though she doesn't know it—of his adopted son. It would be easy to accuse Allen of working out some personal demons here, but the movie doesn't come across as therapy. It treads enjoyably over old ground, and it has a surprisingly foul mouth, though rather than cruising along with the ease of Allen's best work it tends to hobble, and it closes in a flurry of undecided endings. Sorvino's comic momentum rescues the picture: with the high, fainting voice of Miss Piggy and a brazen good cheer to match, she offers the alarming prospect of sexual comedy without neurosis. You don't see *that* too often in a Woody Allen film.—A.L. (10/30/95) (19th Street East 6, Cinema I, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Now and Then—A writer (Demi Moore), a starlet (Melanie Griffith), a doctor (Rosie O'Donnell), and a housewife (Rita Wilson) gather in their Indiana hometown and recall the summer of 1970, when they were twelve and left to their own devices by parents beginning to experiment with divorce and hedonism. The phony "Big Chill" premise is a shame—the four talented actresses who play the girls (Gaby Hoffmann, Thora Birch, Christina Ricci, and Ashleigh Aston Moore, respectively) could have carried the movie far better on their own. The film ends with a depressing bit of post-feminist wisdom: the future sexpot and the future housewife—the ones who close their eyes and buy the stereotypes—wind up the most fulfilled. Written by I. Marlene King; directed, baggily, by Lesli Linka Glatter.—S.K. (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, Gotham Cinema, 86th Street East Twin, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

The Scarlet Letter—A new version of Hawthorne, adapted by Douglas Day Stewart and directed by Roland Joffé—though all you really need to know is that Demi Moore plays Hester Prynne. The picture achieves a lustful, lugubrious camp, but, sadly, the camp is never high; Joffé isn't exactly a good sport, and he appears to take this ridiculous movie seriously. You can laugh at the nude bathing sequences or at Hester's curious decision to make out with Dimmesdale (Gary Oldman) in a pile of grain, but the picture is too embarrassing to be a scream, and Moore, though high in the bosom, is depressingly down in the mouth.—A.L. (10/30/95) (Guild; through Nov. 2.)

Seven—The murders in David Fincher's serial-killer mystery are grisly tableaux, each artfully arranged to illustrate one of the seven deadly sins. This kind of self-conscious literary conceit can work if it's handled with a light, parodic touch, but the movie's clammy design and glum cinematography try to persuade us that what we're watching is a serious meditation on the nature of evil. The police detectives are Morgan Freeman, as weary old Somerset, and Brad Pitt, as brash young Mills; Freeman, with his immense dignity and authority, manages to keep his head above water, but Pitt goes under.—T.R. (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, Cinema II, Orpheum VII, Lincoln Square, Olympia, and Criterion Center.)

Demi Moore in "The Scarlet Letter."

TINOU LE JULY SENOVILLE

Vampire in Brooklyn—Eddie Murphy gives the laughs to his supporting actors, but not out of generosity: the jokes aren't funny, just recycled bits from movies like "An American Werewolf in London" and "Love at First Bite." As the violent bloodsucker who tries to lure Angela Bassett into his coffin, the star lowers his voice and flattens his energy; it's disheartening to see him so lost in his attempt to reinvent himself. (Allen Payne, who plays the rival for Bassett's affections, is far more charming.) This picture isn't going to break Murphy's creative losing streak—it's a jack-o'-lantern without a candle.—B.D. (Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, Manhattan Twin, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, Embassy 1, and Embassy 2.)

ALSO PLAYING

THE ADDICTION: Angelika Film Center. . . . **ASSASSINS:** Village East Cinemas, 34th Street Showplace, Gemini, Orpheum VII, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center. . . . **BABE** (reviewed in our issue of 9/4/95): 59th Street East Cinema. . . . **THE BROTHERS MC MULLEN:** Angelika Film Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Carnegie Hall Cinemas. . . . **BURNT BY THE SUN** (5/8/95): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **CLOCKERS** (9/18/95): 62nd & Broadway and National Twin. . . . **CRUMB** (5/1/95): Film Forum 3. . . . **DEAR BABE:** Quad Cinema. . . . **THE DOOM GENERATION:** Angelika Film Center. . . . **FEAST OF JULY:** Village East Cinemas and 68th St. Playhouse. . . . **HARLEM DIARY: NINE VOICES OF RESILIENCE:** Quad Cinema. . . . **JADE:** 34th Street Showplace, Tower East, Waverly, Lincoln Square, and Astor Plaza. . . . **JEFFREY:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Lincoln Square. . . . **A MONTH BY THE LAKE:** Village East Cinemas and Plaza. . . . **THE NET** (8/7/95): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **NEVER TALK TO STRANGERS:** Movieland 8th Street Triplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center. . . . **NINE MONTHS** (7/24/95): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **PERSUASION** (9/25/95): Paris. . . . **THE POSTMAN:** Eastside Playhouse, Quad Cinema, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **POWDER:** Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Sutton, 86th Street East Twin, Lincoln Square, and Embassy 3. . . . **SHOWGIRLS** (10/9/95): 59th Street East Cinema and Criterion Center. . . . **SMOKE:** Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **SPECIES:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **SPIKE & MIKE'S FESTIVAL OF ANIMATION '95:** Cinema Village. . . . **STRANGE DAYS** (10/9/95): Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Murray Hill Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Ziegfeld, and Regency. . . . **THREE WISHES:** First & 62nd Cinemas, East 85th Street, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, and Lincoln Square. . . . **TO DIE FOR:** Village Theatre VII, First & 62nd Cinemas, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, and Lincoln Square. . . . **UNSTRUNG HEROES:** Cinema 3rd Avenue. . . . **UNZIPPED:** Cinema 3. . . . **THE USUAL SUSPECTS** (8/14/95): New York Twin, Quad Cinema, and Lincoln Square. . . . **A WALK IN THE CLOUDS:** Worldwide Cinemas.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

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(For show times, call 777-FILM.)

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St.
Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th St.
Village Theatre VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th St.
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St.
Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th St.
19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th St.
34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th St.
34th St. East, 241 E. 34th St.
Eastside Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 55th St.
Sutton 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th St.
Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th St.
Plaza, 42 E. 58th St.
Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th St.
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.
Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th St.
Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th St.
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.
Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th St.
Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th St.
New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th St.
68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th St.
Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st St.
East 85th Street, 1st Ave. at 85th St.
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th St.
Orpheum VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th St.
86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th St.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum 1 and 3, 209 W. Houston St.
Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd St.
Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th St.
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.
23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd St.
Guild, 33 W. 50th St.
Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves.
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.
Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th Sts.
Angelika 57, 225 W. 57th St.
Paris, 4 W. 58th St.
Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th St.
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St.
Regency, Broadway at 67th St.
Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.
84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.
Metro Cinema 1 and 2, Broadway at 99th St.
Olympia I and II, Broadway at 107th St.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, Broadway at 44th St.
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Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th St.
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at Broadway.
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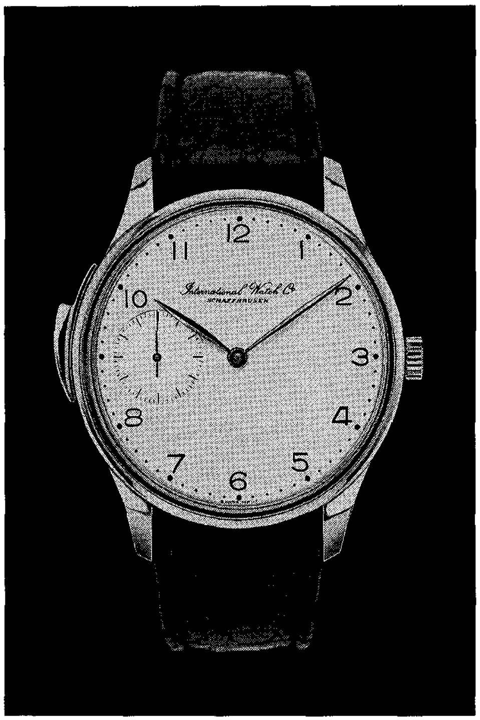

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REVIVALS

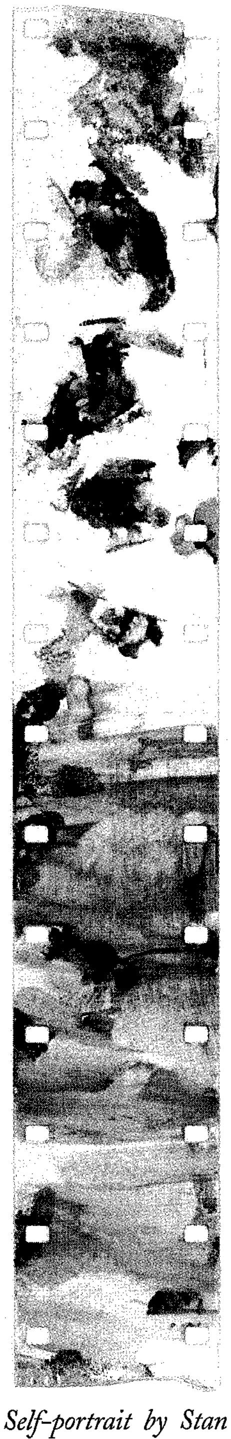
(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow. Theatre addresses and phone numbers appear with the listings following these notes.)

Belle de Jour (1967)—Luis Buñuel was in his late sixties when he made this icy, bracingly unwholesome film about the secret life of an elegant Parisian bourgeoise. Sévérine (Catherine Deneuve), who is frigid with her handsome and considerate husband (Jean Sorel), spends her afternoons as a prostitute in a discreet, upscale brothel. The movie, adapted by Buñuel and Jean-Claude Carrière from a popular novel by Joseph Kessel, is a pristine example of the great filmmaker's serenely outrageous late style. In this picture, desire has a de-luxe blandness that's both mysterious and deeply, unnervingly funny. Also with Michel Piccoli, Geneviève Page, and Pierre Clementi. In French.—T.R. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Brighton Rock (1947)—Graham Greene's 1938 novel about a man who goes to hell was filmed with the young and chilling Richard Attenborough as the vicious teen-age leader of a gang of slashers. In this tense thriller, the suspense is indistinguishable from dread—everything is tinged with evil. With Hermione Baddeley as the blowsy singer, Harcourt Williams as the dilapidated lawyer, and William Hartnell and Carol Marsh. John and Roy Boulting produced and directed; adapted by Greene and Terence Rattigan.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; Nov. 4-5.)

Caddie (1976)—The reserved, aloof Caddie (played by the lovely, toothy Helen Morse) is a young Australian housewife who, in 1925, leaves her husband, taking their two small children with her; penniless, she goes to work as a barmaid. The picture often has the charm of photographs of the past, but that's all it has. Every time we get interested in someone who crosses Caddie's path—the snappy barmaid Josie (Jacki Weaver), the brash, flippant bookie Ted (Jack Thompson, who gives the film a burst of energy), the shy peddler Sonny (Drew Forsythe)—and some interaction seems possible, the character promptly drops out of the picture, never to return. Directed by Donald Crombie.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; Nov. 6.)

The Devil's Playground (1976)—This semiautobiographical first feature by the Australian writer-director Fred Schepisi is always on the borderline of comedy, because neither the Marist Brothers at the Catholic seminary around which most of the film is set nor the pubescent seminarians can get their minds off their bodies. This isn't an anti-Catholic movie. Far from it. Schepisi loves these tormented comedians. But he looks at them with humorous pagan eyes, and you feel he's got the whole thing right. With the novelist Thomas Keneally as the bald and bewhiskered Father Marshall, Arthur Dignam as Brother Francine, and Nick Tate as Brother Victor, who goes into the city wearing civvies, picks up two women and flirts and teases right up to the verge of actual sex, and then escapes, gasping, "They nearly had me."—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; Nov. 2.)



Self-portrait by Stan Brakhage (MOMA and Anthology Film Archives)

The Lion in Winter (1968)—Imitation wit and imitation poetry at the twelfth-century court of the Plantagenets. Anthony Harvey directed James Goldman's adaptation of his own 1966 play. Peter O'Toole is in great voice and good spirits as Henry II—he's so robust he almost carries the role off. Not a small feat when you have to deliver lines such as "Well, what shall we hang? The holly or each other?" and "The sky is pocked with stars." As Eleanor of Aquitaine, Katharine Hepburn does a gallant-ravaged-great-lady number. She draws upon our feelings for *her*, not for the character she's playing, and the self-exploitation is hard to take. With Timothy Dalton as King Philip of France and Anthony Hopkins as Prince Richard.—P.K. (A Different Light Bookstore; Nov. 5.)

Patrick (1978)—This awkward Australian horror movie has been sutured together, Frankenstein's-monster fashion, from the loose parts of other horror films (including "Carrie" and "Frankenstein" itself). Patrick, a sexually confused teen-ager, electrocutes his mother and her lover, somehow throwing himself into a coma. Mad Dr. Roget (Robert Helpmann) keeps him alive in an old dark clinic, where he develops psychokinetic powers strong enough to upset electrical systems. He uses these powers against anyone who courts his favorite nurse (Susan Penhaligon) or thinks of flicking off his life support. Under Richard Franklin's direction, this hybrid creation does move—or at least lumber. But for the United States release the soundtrack was dubbed into "American," and any nuances in Everett De Roche's clumsily stitched script were lost in translation.—M.S. (Museum of Modern Art; Nov. 3 and 5.)

The Third Man (1950)—The most famous collaboration of the director Carol Reed and the screenwriter Graham Greene has the structure of a good suspense thriller and an atmosphere of baroque, macabre decadence. The simple American, Joseph Cotten, arrives in postwar Vienna to meet an old friend. Orson Welles's portrait of the friend, Harry Lime, is a study of corruption—evil, witty, unreachable. It's balanced against Trevor Howard's quietly elegant underplaying of the Army officer who teaches the simple American some of the uglier facts of life. The Cotten character is alone against the forces of the city and, in a final devastating stroke, he is even robbed of the illusion that the girl (Alida Valli) is interested in him, yet his illusions are so commonplace that his disillusion does not strike us deeply.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; Nov. 4-5.)

LATE RUNS, CLASSICS, ETC.

(Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.)

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)—Nov. 1: "Corridor of Mirrors" (1948, Terence Young) and "Frieda" (1947, Basil Dearden). . . . Nov. 2: "Mine Own Executioner" (1947, Anthony Kimmins) and "Offbeat" (1960, Cliff Owen). . . . Nov. 3: "The Intimate Stranger" (1956, Joseph Losey) and "Blind Date" (1959, Losey). . . . Nov. 4-5: "The Third Man" (†) and "Brighton Rock" (†). . . . Nov. 6: "The October Man" (1947, Roy Baker) and "Uncle Silas" (1947, Charles Frank). . . . Nov. 7: "A Place to Go" (1963, Dearden) and "The Rough and the Smooth" (1959, Robert Siodmak).

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—A series of films from Australia. Nov. 2 at 2:30 and Nov. 4 at 5: "Sunday Too Far Away" (1975, Ken Hannam). . . . Nov. 2 at 6: "The Devil's Playground" (†). . . . Nov. 2 at 8 and Nov. 5 at 2: "Sons of Matthew" (1949, Charles Chauvel). . . . Nov. 3 at 2:30 and Nov. 5 at 5: "Patrick" (†). . . . Nov. 3 at 6: "Death in Brunswick" (1991, John Ruane). . . . Nov. 3 at 8:15 and Nov. 4 at 2: "Goodbye Paradise" (1983, Carl Schultz). . . . Nov. 6 at 2:30: "Caddie" (†). . . . Nov. 6 at 5: "In the Wake of the Bounty" (1933, Chauvel). . . . Nov. 7 at 2:30: "Careful, He Might Hear You" (1983, Schultz). . . . Nov. 7 at 6: "Don's Party" (1976, Bruce Beresford). . . . ¶ Nov. 2 at 3 and 6: "Oasis of Peace" (1995, Jocelyn M. Ajami), a documentary. . . . ¶ Nov. 3 at 3, 6, and 8; Nov. 4-5 at 2 and 5; Nov. 6 at 3; and Nov. 7 at 3 and 6: A retrospective of the works of Stan Brakhage. . . . ¶ Nov. 6 at 6:30: Short films by Garine Torossian, who will be present.

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level (875-5600)—A program of independent Japanese films; all in Japanese, with English subtitles. Nov. 1 at 2 and 6:15: "Breakable" (1993, Takayoshi Yamaguchi). . . . Nov. 1 at 4 and 7:45: "Ruffians" (1994, Teruo Ishii). . . . Nov. 2 at 2 and 6:15 and Nov. 3 at 4 and 7:45: "Elephant Song" (1994, Go Riju). . . . Nov. 2 at 4 and Nov. 3 at 2, 6:15, and 9:15: "Monkeys in Paradise" (1993, Kenchi Iwamoto). . . . Nov. 4 at 4 and 8 and Nov. 5 at 6: "Tokyo Kyodai" (1994, Jun Ichikawa). . . . Nov. 4 at 6 and 9:50 and Nov. 5 at 4 and 8: "Down the Drain" (1993, Shinobu Yaguchi). . . . ¶ Weekend showings for children. Nov. 4-5 at 2: "Napoleon and Samantha" (1972, Bernard McEveety).

Museum of Television and Radio, 25 W. 52nd St. (621-6800)—Television shows by the team of William Hanna and Joseph Barbera. Through Nov. 17: "The Jetsons." . . . ¶ James Dean's television appearances. Through Nov. 19: "The Bells of Cockaigne" (1953) and "Sentence of Death" (1953).

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (1-718 784-0077)—A sampling of films made at the Astoria Studio over its seventy-five-year history. Nov. 4 at 1: Short films with Burns and Allen, Smith and Dale, and Eddie Cantor. . . . Nov. 4 at 2: "Zaza" (1923, Allan Dwan), with Gloria Swanson. . . . Nov. 4 at 4: "Monsieur Beaucaire" (1924, Sidney Olcott), with Rudolph Valentino. . . . Nov. 5 at 1: Short films with Jack Benny, Fred Allen, and Buster Keaton. . . . Nov. 5 at 2: "Love 'Em and Leave 'Em" (1926, Frank Tuttle), with Evelyn Brent and Louise Brooks. . . . Nov. 5 at 4: "So's Your Old Man" (1926, Gregory La Cava), with W. C. Fields.

A Different Light Bookstore, 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850)—A Sunday-night series of free films (and popcorn). On Nov. 5 at 7, the feature will be "The Lion in Winter" (†).

Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. (864-5400)—Nov. 7 at 7: "Touch of Evil" (1958, Orson Welles), with Welles, Charlton Heston, and Janet Leigh. . . . Nov. 7 at 9:15: "Pickpocket" (1958, Robert Bresson; in French).

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—Nov. 7 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "The Tree, the Mayor and the Mediathèque" (1993, Eric Rohmer; in French).

Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5181)—Nov. 1 at 7:30 and Nov. 3 at 10: "Sodom and Gomorrah" (1922, Michael Curtiz). . . . Nov. 1 at 10:30 and Nov. 4 at 1: "Cafe Elektric" (1927, Gustov Ucicky). . . . Nov. 3 at 8 and Nov. 4 at 3: Two different programs of short films by Kenneth Anger. . . . Nov. 4 at 8: Short films by Stan Brakhage. . . . Nov. 5 at 6: "Mass for the Dakota Sioux" (1964) and "Quixote" (1965), both by Bruce Baillie. . . . Nov. 5 at 8: Short films by Jordon Belson, Baillie, and Douglass Crockwell.

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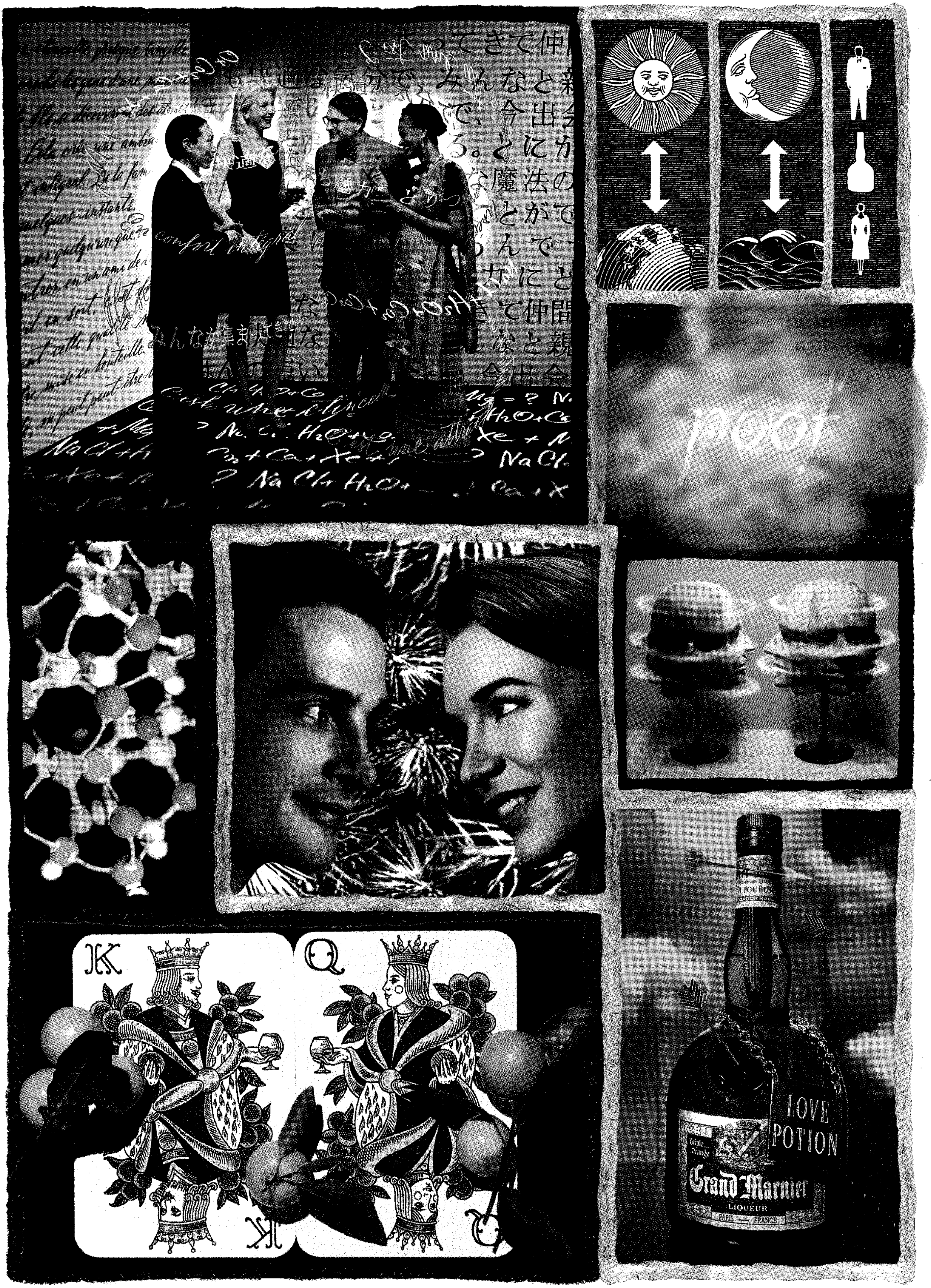
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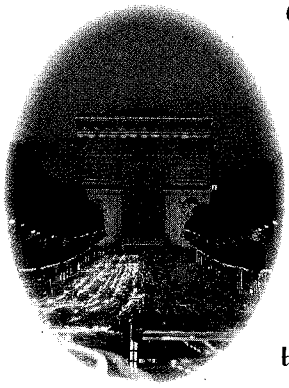

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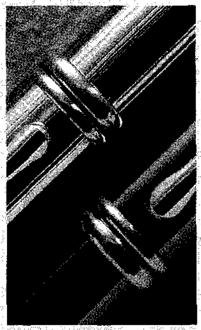
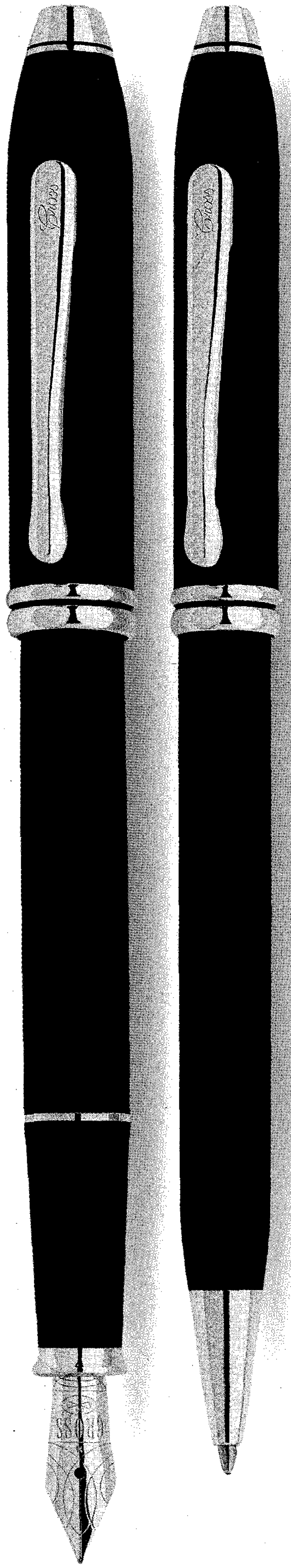


Exquisite design accents, classic Cross styling



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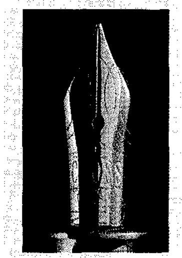

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THE
NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

SCUTTLE DIPLOMACY

It is never appetizing to watch a politician, much less a distinguished member of the bar, make a public attempt at moral discrimination, but such was the willful decision of Mayor Rudolph Giuliani at last week's United Nations festival of heads of state. The facts are by now well known: As the co-host of a gala concert at Lincoln Center, Giuliani sent one of his aides over to Yasir Arafat, the head of the Palestine National Authority, and asked him to leave. After two movements of Beethoven's Ninth, Arafat headed out into the night. Thus was conducted the foreign policy of the City of New York.

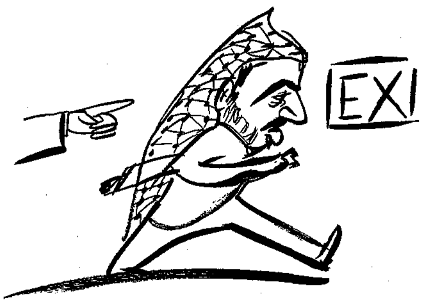
The State Department condemned Giuliani's action, but it can count itself lucky that the Mayor did not try to have Arafat arrested. At a 1989 campaign appearance in the Pelham Parkway area of the Bronx, Giuliani told an audience of Jewish voters that if it were up to him he would try to have Arafat detained on suspicion of links to terrorist acts. As United States Attorney, he tried, but failed, to close down the Palestinians' U.N. mission.

Giuliani, a famously unavailable mayor, quickly made himself available to the media, the better to remind the world that Arafat was a terrorist and that he, for one, a former prosecutor, was not going to forget it. Presumably, the Mayor believes that Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli Prime Minister, who was once a fierce leader of the Israel Defense Forces, had forgotten all about Arafat's history before waving to him at Lincoln Center. That is doubtful. Whether they adore each other or not, Rabin and Arafat are now negotiating partners in a process that could conceivably bring a measure of peace to the Middle East.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL

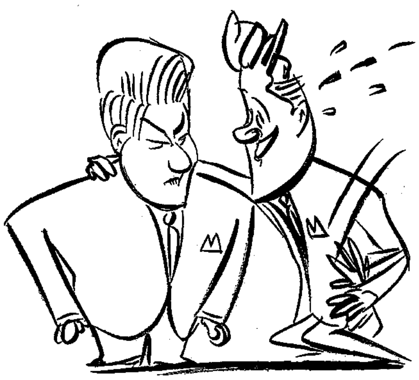
The Mayor, of course, was posturing toward other—and closer—precincts. Anthony Weiner, a councilman from Brooklyn who also has a foreign policy, was delighted with the Mayor: "In my community," he told the *Post*, "you probably couldn't have written a scenario better than giving the mayor the opportunity to beat up Yasser Arafat." While he boasted of booting Arafat, the Mayor apparently saw little wrong in breaking bread with Zaire's Mobutu at a party he hosted at the World Financial Center last Saturday. Mobutu has pillaged his country and deposited the proceeds in Swiss accounts. The Mayor's circle may have calculated that he can hold the outer boroughs in a reëlection campaign without the Zairean-American vote. The Mayor has also made nice with Gerry Adams (the Irish-American vote) and made hash of Fidel Castro (the Cuban-émigré vote).

To be fair, the U.N. social whirl presented difficulties for nearly everyone. President Clinton, who has graver obligations than the Mayor does, went in the opposite direction in his meeting with the just barely lifelike President of Russia, Boris Yeltsin. (With each passing month, Yeltsin looks more like a puffed-out version of the late Konstantin Chernenko, whitening and widening all the time.)



Yasir Arafat

Although their talks at Hyde Park were of no great moment—the main agreement seemed to be to avoid public conflict—the press conference that followed was a work of performance art. When Yeltsin cracked a fairly lame joke about the press, Clinton doubled over and howled with laughter. His strategy of ingratiation was that of a man trying to keep a potentially violent house guest amused. And with good reason: Yeltsin's most recent accomplishment as a statesman was his decision to order the devastation of Chechnya, costing at least twenty thousand lives.



Boris Yeltsin and Bill Clinton

Now that all the leaders are gone, New York, like any other host at the end of a rather tense and too large get-together, can shut the door and sigh with relief. The city can also turn away from the spectacle of the Mayor's gyrations and recall a sweeter moment of diplomatic surrealism—that one moment when, during a photo shoot for all the assembled heads of state, China's Jiang Zemin, himself no paragon of human rights, turned to President Clinton and, without a translator to help him, lifted up his hands, pursed his lips, and blew out a little wind. It was a friendly gesture. Jiang was playing the air saxophone.

OUT OF SOUTH AFRICA

Nelson Mandela

IN the beginning there was the novel, by Alan Paton. Then there was the musical, by Maxwell Anderson and Kurt Weill, and a film, by Zoltán Korda. Now there is another film, which had its world première at the Ziegfeld here the other night billed as "Anant Singh's 'Cry, the Beloved Country.' " The première, staged by Miramax, the picture's American distributor, coincided with the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, making it convenient for luminaries like the South African President, Nelson Mandela, and Hillary Rodham Clinton to attend. Also, since the Knicks weren't playing, Charles Smith, their silky forward, was there.

Paton's great novel sat strangely, however, at the center of the première's flash and hubbub. It is, after all, a quietly majestic book about the travails of an old Zulu pastor who in the early nineteen-forties journeys from his rural home to Johannesburg to find his son. Written in rolling, formal, Biblical cadences, the novel had an old-fashioned quality even in 1948, when it was first published. Today, particularly when adapted for the screen, it feels less like a novel than like an opera: stately, heroic, formidably archaic.

Nelson Mandela has much the same quality, of course. That may be why Singh, the film's producer and a thoroughly modern young mogul from Durban, seemed to struggle to get Mandela into focus as he introduced him to the Ziegfeld audience after the screening. "Imagine spending ten thousand days in prison," Singh said wonderingly. "It's just shocking that this actually happened." (He seemed on firmer ground describing the casting of the film, which stars James Earl Jones and Richard Harris. "It was great getting Richard," he said casually. "It was so much easier than what you normally have to deal with when you have this kind of property.")

Mandela, looking sharp in a long-sleeved black shirt buttoned to the throat and trimmed with silver studs, told a charming story on himself as a young lawyer—about winning a case "in spite of" his own efforts to impress the magistrate with irrelevant erudition. Then, growing serious, he said that this film "will evoke, for my generation, bittersweet memories of our youth." He mentioned that at his own trial for high treason, more than thirty years ago, Alan Paton had testified, pleading for mercy in sentencing. Something he did not mention was that he had reasonably expected to receive a death sentence that day. The cognitive dissonance of the evening—between the glittering, largely show-business crowd and the harsh, valiant history depicted in the film and embodied by Mandela—was perhaps intense enough already.

In any event, the main aim of the evening, as far as Mandela was concerned, was to raise money—to launch, that is, the Friends of the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund, Inc., the American branch of a South African charity. Toward that end, he described a late-night encounter he had recently had with some street children in Cape Town who would be likely beneficiaries of the fund. And later, at a benefit dinner across the street at Remi, he told the story again. Then he gently put the arm on a few hundred prosperous-looking folk, some of whom had paid twenty-five hundred dollars to be there. Discreetly distributed flyers explained that to become a member of the fund's President's Club would require a donation of fifty thousand dollars a year for five consecutive years. Denzel Washington had shown the way by donating a cool million dollars. Mandela beamed when the gift was announced, and embraced Washington's wife, Pauletta. Then his eye seemed to fall on Charles Smith.

HAVE I GOT A SCHOOL FOR YOU

ANTHONY ALVARADO is a very persuasive man with a very tough product to sell—the New York City public schools. He is the last person to have served as the city's schools chancellor who is remembered fondly for the work he did. He stepped down in 1984 under a cloud of financial scandal; for the past eight years, he has served as superintendent of School District 2, which covers the East Side of Manhattan and the West Side below Fifty-ninth Street. The other night, Alvarado, a slight man with thinning gray hair and an emphatically emphatic manner, unleashed his rhetorical gifts on some three hundred Upper East Side parents gathered beneath the ornately painted ceiling of Buttenweiser Hall, in the fabled 92nd Street Y. What had brought the parents together was their willingness to consider the possibility of, or maybe just to hear about the possibility of, sending their precious five-year-olds to the public schools. It was a great moment in the history of salesmanship.

Anthony Alvarado

The city's public schools have been in the news a lot recently, but not for anything good, so Alvarado began by saying, "What you read in the paper has *nothing* to do with the quality of most of the schools in this district." Alvarado has a distinctive gesture in which he jabs a forefinger out of a balled-up fist, and he was pumping from the word go. The District 2 schools, Alvarado insisted, were characterized by academic rigor, highly professional teachers and administrators, and an atmosphere at once joyous, serious, and safe. At times, he seemed to be daring himself to top himself. "I think we really do the finest work in literacy in the country," he said. "Our teachers are authors. Our *principals* are authors."

Alvarado's listeners could not have been wholly deaf to his entreaties. It now costs approximately fifteen thousand dollars to send a child to first grade in one of New York's most desirable private schools. Public schools, of course, cost approximately nothing. Many of these parents, themselves graduates of public schools, would love to believe in them enough to send their children there. And, in fact, some of the elementary schools on the East Side are almost as good as their unsinkable booster was claiming. Still, there was a lot of resistance to overcome.

Alvarado raised the issue of class size himself, in the manner of a seasoned trial lawyer "drawing the poison" of an inevitably hostile line of questioning to come. Fifteen kids are better than thirty, he conceded. "But," he added, in his high, hectoring, streets-of-New York voice, "if you have an outstanding teacher, then larger class sizes are *not* an overwhelming problem." He admitted, too, that many parents were afraid to send their children to a public junior high school. Actually, he said, the schools just felt a little bit scary because "the kids are bigger." At one point, he let his voice drop confidentially and spoke to the deepest of all parental anxieties. Leaning over his lectern, he said, "If you actually go to a public school, unless your grandparents or your great-grandparents went to Harvard, you probably have a better shot at getting into an Ivy League school" than if you come through one of the city's pedigreed private academies. He did not provide statistics.

Alvarado finished with a forearm jab and a pointed reference to "your pocketbook." Shortly afterward, the parents lined up behind a microphone. Their questions were fearsomely articulate. Alvarado stumbled when he was asked how the district could hold on to good teachers, given the relatively low salary scale. He talked about "professional satisfaction" and about the joys of living in the city, but then, forgetting himself, he tried to approach the subject head-on. "The salary scale for teachers in New York," he said, "is not . . ." You could see he was searching desperately for a euphemism. Finally, he said that it was not "an atrociously low figure." The crowd roared with laughter.

The silver-tongued Alvarado recovered quickly. Everyone wanted to know about "gifted programs," so Alvarado said that two of his own four girls had been slotted into regular classes and had done just as well as the other two. What about school rankings? No problem. He suggested that the only difference between a school ranked tenth and one ranked ninetieth might be that the latter has some diplomats' kids in it who speak all sorts of languages, though not much English.

After ninety minutes, the superintendent showed no signs of flagging. When the line had petered out, a woman advanced to the microphone and said, "Mr. Alvarado, you could sell steak to a vegetarian." He had to laugh: it was true.

BANGS, BANGS

THE new long bangs are like life: they don't make sense. But never mind. During Fashion Week, thin women on runways will be clutching at their new long bangs, removing them from their eyes. Even women who tend to contemplate their hair from every angle in any available reflective surface have trouble understanding the new long bangs. A young, fashionable woman with the reddest, thickest, straightest long hair and no bangs at all said recently, "They're bangs *in a way* . . . but not really," and added, as if she'd given the matter considerable thought, "They're not *quite* bangs."

A shy young woman who's a newcomer to the city tried to answer questions about her new long bangs over the telephone.

REPORTER: How long are your bangs?

NEWCOMER: Let's just pull them all down. (*Pause.*) They come down below my eyes. There are shorter bangs under the longer bangs. Let me look in the mirror. (*Silence.*)

REPORTER: So what do you think about those bangs?

NEWCOMER: I don't like to talk about it. It's a personal thing that you deal with within yourself.

A married working woman—brunette, with short hair and the new long bangs—sounded as if the new long bangs made her tired. "They come down to my nose, and I spend the entire day pushing them back," she said. "And at home, before I make dinner I have to pin them back off my face in the most unappealing way. My sister who lives in Syracuse has them—it's all because of 'Friends.' I think in the show they all have them, except for the blonde. The bangs are supposed to be sexy. You want to look like you just rolled out of bed, to not look like you have *finished* hair."

The very tall hairdresser John Sahag said of the new long bangs, "There is a *feeling* out there, a mood. If you don't understand that mood—part of the rhythm of life—you've certainly *missed* the point."

"What if the models can't see out of their bangs on the runway?"

"It doesn't matter, does it?"

It's sometimes best to call *Vogue* when confusion about the new long bangs becomes intolerable. *Vogue*, after all, featured them in page after page of its October issue.

REPORTER: So why these new long bangs?

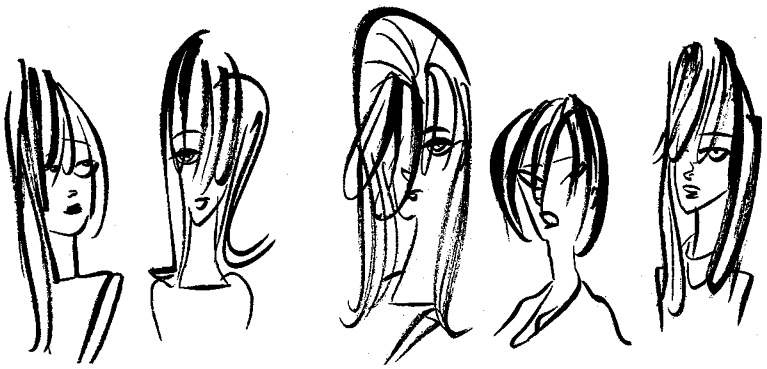
VOGUE: The *sixties*. Hanging down—it's hip, kind of rebellious. When they're brushed to the side, it's more ladylike, more controlled.

REPORTER: Like Jackie Kennedy's?

VOGUE: That's when you tease them a bit—that's the more Republican Jackie look, even though she was a Democrat.

REPORTER: But isn't seeing a problem?

VOGUE: Well, that's the thing. A clear view of what's in front of you *is* more important. You don't want to fall into a ditch.



DOWNTOWN ARTTHROB

IF this were the eighties, and the artist Matthew Barney were twenty-eight, as he is now, and were as supremely gifted and movie-star handsome as he is now (long, aquiline nose, blue eyes, slim physique), not only would he be a candidate for that decade's pantheon of striking, charismatic, talented male artists—Francesco Clemente, Eric Fischl, Jean-Michel Basquiat—but he would head the group. That's because Barney, who makes sculptures, installations, drawings, photographs, and video work (the two most recent examples of which are entitled "Cremaster 1" and "Cremaster 4," and were the hits of the video portion of the recent New York Film Festival), is a peculiarly American artist, in that his work explores the myths upon which American masculinity is based, especially as they are enacted in sports arenas, which many males think of as the playing field of life.

That Barney grew up in Boise, Idaho, where he was a football hero who got recruited to Yale, and helped put himself through college as a model for J. Crew may account for several of his preoccupations as an artist, but it doesn't entirely account for his distinctive aesthetic and its unmitigated *strangeness*. In Barney's studio, in lower Manhattan, one doesn't see the standard tools of the sculptor's trade but, instead, Vaseline, fibreglass, athletic mats, and sheets of self-lubricating plastic, some of which have been fashioned into frames and sculptures.

Barney's dealer, Barbara Gladstone, who is a woman of formidable chic and a sharply discerning eye, hosted a party at her home before the screening at the festival. The gathering, which was attended by Barney well-wishers from the world where art, critical theory, and money converge, included the *Times* art critic Roberta Smith, the dealer Clarissa Dalrymple, and the photographer Michael O'Brien. Looking ebullient but exhausted in a black thermal shirt and black motorcycle boots, and with his chestnut hair tied in Chinese knots that floated like tiny dark satellites above his head, Barney offered several admirers a radiant smile. It is the rare combination of Barney's charismatic presence and the impressiveness of his mind that often puzzles his interlocutors, who would prefer him to choose one way of being over the other. Still, Barney will answer a question like "Do your videos record how a guy's balls drop? I heard that's what 'Cremaster' means" with seemingly infinite patience, explaining that a cremaster is an actual muscle that regulates testicular position, depending on heat or cold. Barney continued: "What I'm trying to do in 'Cremaster 4' is find appropriate metaphors to describe, first, our common pregendered physical state—the point at which we are neither male nor female—and, eventually, how we become male."

In "Cremaster 1," a blue football field crowded with young women in Busby Berkeley-like formations meant to resemble aspects of female anatomy and reproduction, such as fallopian tubes and eggs splitting, takes shape as Marti Domination, a tall, pale fixture of downtown nightlife, is seen rubbing Vaseline on small grapes reminiscent of the balls seen on DNA models. Meanwhile, two Goodyear blimps occasionally float over the blue field's goalposts.

When Barney took the stage to answer questions after that night's festival screening, he was met by thunderous applause. He didn't seem to take any of it in: he simply flashed his Matthew Barney smile and began speaking his singular Matthew Barney mind, all of which announced the first certified art star of the nineties.

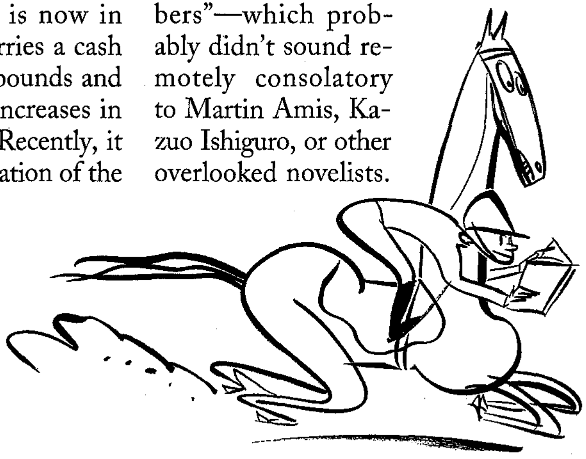
THE BOOK ON THE BOOKER PRIZE

THERE is no Vegas line on the National Book Awards, whose finalists were announced October 19th, but if you're in the mood for a literary flutter, there is still time to phone in a transatlantic bet on the Booker Prize, which will be announced on November 7th. The Booker, which is Britain's best-known fiction award and is now in its twenty-seventh year, carries a cash award of twenty thousand pounds and the promise of significant increases in sales of the winning novel. Recently, it has also captured the imagination of the great British betting public.

William Hill and Ladbrokes, the chain stores of U.K. gambling, each take in between twenty-five and thirty thousand pounds in Booker bets. According to Graham Sharpe, who sets the odds at William Hill, this year Salman Rushdie's "The Moor's Last Sigh" is the hot favorite, at 4/5 on, while Pat Barker's "The Ghost Road," at 3/1, is "the best bet." Sharpe, whose customary areas of expertise are horses and greyhounds, said that to open and shift his odds he responds to what he reads in the papers, the opinions of literary critics, and the reputations of the authors and judges, and then he reads the novels himself. "Personally," he said, in a rough North London accent, "I found the Rushdie the most difficult of the books to get through—but what do I know?"

The book on the Booker is only one part of William Hill's "Culture File," through which you can bet on the Oscars, or even on the Turner art prize. "Horse racing is our bread and butter," Sharpe explained, "but just because you don't want to plunk down money on the 2:30 at Sandown doesn't mean you're not a gambling animal." A London publicist said she'd heard a rumor that Rushdie has placed a heavy bet on his rival, Barker, thus insuring that he wins either way.

The Booker isn't the Derby or the Grand National, but the announcement of the winner at a fancy Guildhall banquet now gets live television coverage timed to make the evening news. What looks like a vulgar and un-British marriage of art and speculative commerce has actually had the effect of increasing interest in intelligent writing. It should be noted that picking the winner in the 2:30 at Sandown is probably easier than second-guessing the Booker judges, who can be quirky and sometimes cranky. This year, the list was cut down from the standard six novels to five. The Conservative M.P. George Walden, who chairs the Booker committee, explained that "we did not want to compromise for the sake of numbers"—which probably didn't sound remotely consolatory to Martin Amis, Kazuo Ishiguro, or other overlooked novelists.



In this country, it's interesting to speculate on how opening a book on the National Book Awards might revitalize awareness of what American publishers quaintly refer to as "literary fiction," as opposed to fiction that sells. Of course, to follow the British model the Americans would have to find a suitably bookish political figure willing to chair the committee, read five works of fiction, and put his or her literary judgment on the line. In a political culture where familiarity with highbrow novels is probably the kiss of death, it's hard to imagine who might bravely step forward. Jimmy Carter's poetry makes him an obvious candidate, but wasn't Dan Quayle halfway through Plato's "Republic" when he left the public arena? ♦

"Scuttle Diplomacy," David Remnick; "Out of South Africa," William Finnegan; "Have I Got a School for You," James Traub; "Bangs, Bangs," Alison Rose; "Downtown Artthrob," Hilton Als; "The Book on the Booker Prize," Jonathan Wilson.

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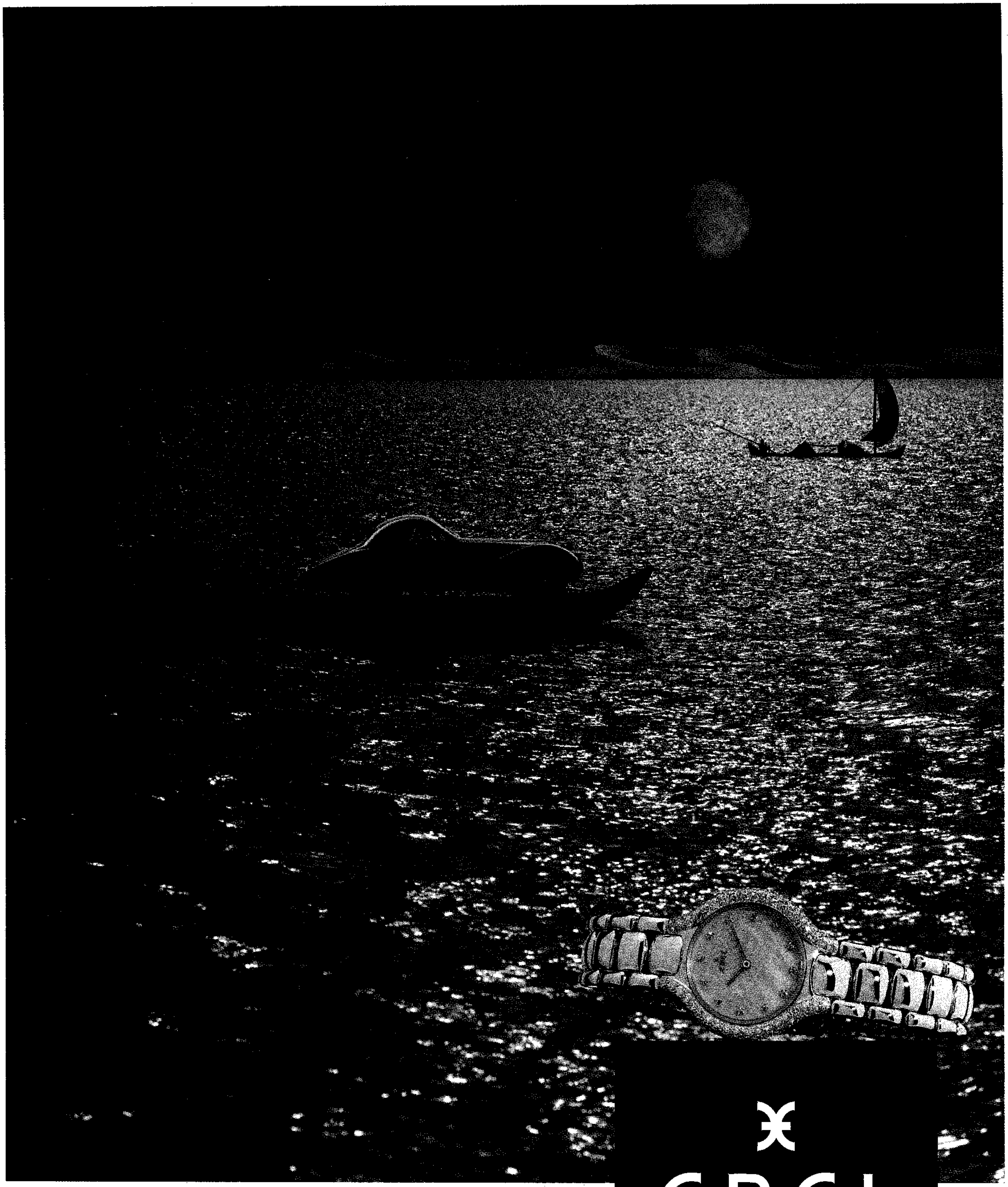

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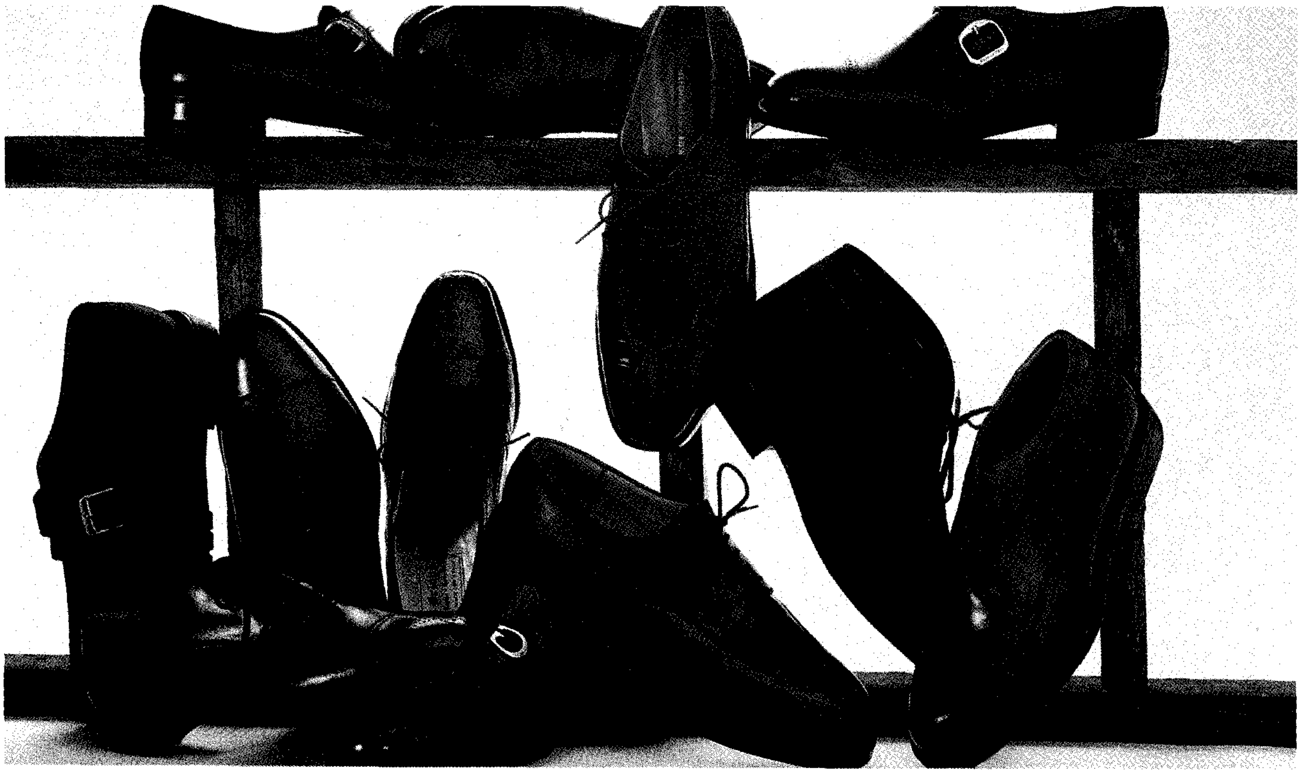

It has been written, variously, that more than any other item in the male wardrobe, a man's shoes express his vanity at its most indulgent. Although this theory has repeatedly been put forth in the last half century, it is not a new idea at all; in fact, ancient artifacts illustrate the idea: wall paintings derived from the earliest civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia, dated from 3500 BC, depict a king being followed by his servant who carries the royal sandals. The Egyptians also had an odd propensity toward painting pictures in which their enemies appeared inside the soles of the Egyptians' shoes so as to "tread" on them figuratively as well as militarily. The treasure trove of King Tut, an indulged lad if ever there was one, included sandals

Photography: Michael Watson Prop Styling: Vicki March
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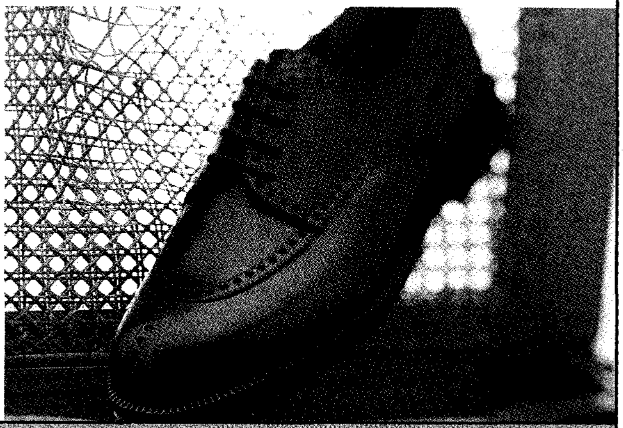

decorated with pictures of the revered Nile. In ancient Greece, footwear was the sign of a free man. To walk barefoot was a dead giveaway you were a slave.

That a good-looking pair of well-made shoes (or sandals, as it were, in ancient times) have been a mark of gentility since time began is inarguable. But vanity, indulgence, and gentility had nothing whatsoever to do with the invention of the shoe. Rather, the shoe was born of primitive man's persistent goal of improving upon nature.

> "...the shoe was born of primitive man's persistent and lifelong goal of improving upon nature."

Above: Perforated split-toe blucher tie par excellence by Fratelli Rossetti. Left: The quintessential tassel slip-on with side detailing by Alden.

It didn't take a genius to understand that the human foot was hardly built for walking along jagged rocks, in murky swamps, or on hard, hot, dusty ground. Throughout the stone age, man, a creature who was nothing if not resourceful, understood that his feet were relatively soft and ill-equipped for negotiating the elements underfoot. Not so for the animals he hunted and eventually domesticated such as goats, sheep, and mules. Just as he took their fur and skin for clothing and tools, so too must he have looked enviously at the tough, protective hoofs nature provided them. Using a layer of animal hide or bark between the soles of his feet and the ground, he secured them with a cord or thong tied around the instep and the ankle. Thus was born the sandal, the progenitor of all footwear that we know today, from moccasins and clogs to shoes and slippers. The high-top Converse All Stars would come a bit later.

The modern men's shoe era dawned right after the turn of the 20th century. Then, like today, the look in men's shoes had a direct correlation to the cut of the trousers. Around 1900, gentlemen's shoes were almost always pointed in the toe and reached well above the ankle, with the top half made of linen or woven fabric rather than leather, for a dressier appearance. This shoe model, which used buttons at the sides for closures, worked perfectly with the exaggerated "peg-top" trouser style then in vogue, which tapered down to narrow, cuffless bottoms. By 1910, as trouser cuffs came into fashion, the pointed toe gave way to the "bulb" toe with sole extensions that were widest at the sides, a perfect balance to the fuller, deeply cuffed trousers with which they were worn. It is to this decade that we also owe the beginnings of the oxford, or as it was first called, the "low shoe," popularized by Oxford University students who first took to wearing the style.

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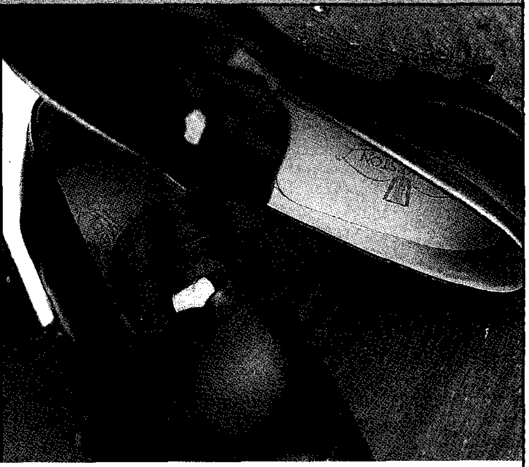
Up until the 1920s, Ivy Leaguers stateside and avant-garde dressers of the period abroad were virtually the only men who wore the oxford and its many variations, including the brogued wing-tip, which was considered a radical new design in men's footwear.

Another shoe style widely advertised during the late 1910s and the '20s was the blucher tie, a low, open, laced-front or throat-over-the-instep model patterned after the military boots worn by General Gebhard Lebrecht von Blucher, who led the Prussian army against Napoleon. Other military styles adapted for civilian wear included the monk-front strap and the Australian bush boot, a slip-on, over-the-ankle model with a plain tip and elastic inserts at the sides. The popularity of these new, low-cut shoes was aided in no small measure by returning servicemen eager to kick off their heavy, government-issue boots.

The oxford represented a move to an easier, more comfortable fit. Before long, the high-top shoe went the way of the stiff, high fitting shirt collar...out the fashion window. It is also to the 1920s that we owe tribute, however dubious, to the two-tone corespondent shoe, which despite its inauspicious debut, soon became accepted into gentlemen's shoe fashion.

> "The first suede oxfords stepped onto the shores of North America on the regal feet of the Prince of Wales in 1924."



Left: A modern classic: double monk strap with fancy wing-tip toe by A. Testoni. Right: The timeless penny loafer updated with split-toe construction by J.M. Weston.

The first suede oxford stepped onto the shores of North America on the regal feet of the Prince of Wales in 1924. Though his sartorial proclivities were already legend on both sides of the Atlantic, fashion observers were aghast at his poor taste in wearing country "reverse calf" (as suede was then called) oxfords with a town suit. Critics of the day called the Prince's fashion risk "a mark of great effeminacy." Nevertheless, another myth of fashion invincibility was shattered. One can only guess what these same critics might have made of his Scottish-born ghillies (oxfords without a tongue, laced across the instep and often worn with argyle hose and plus fours) or kilties (oxfords with a tongue of fringed leather that is draped over the instep and covers the laces and eyelets).

Less than half a decade later, brown reverse calf shoes, copied copiously from the Prince's own, were de rigueur in town with tweeds and flannels. No less astute a fashion observer than Fred Astaire took to wearing brown reverse calf shoes with his navy suits with noticeable regularity, both on film and on Hollywood's back lots.

It is to the mid '30s that we owe the fashion rage for a peculiar slip-on style with a moccasin front, popularly known as "Weejuns," a name registered by G.H. Bass & Co., which was a variation of the

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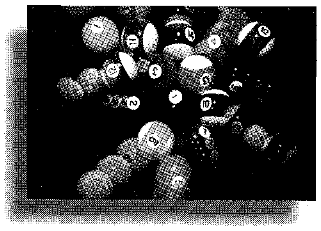

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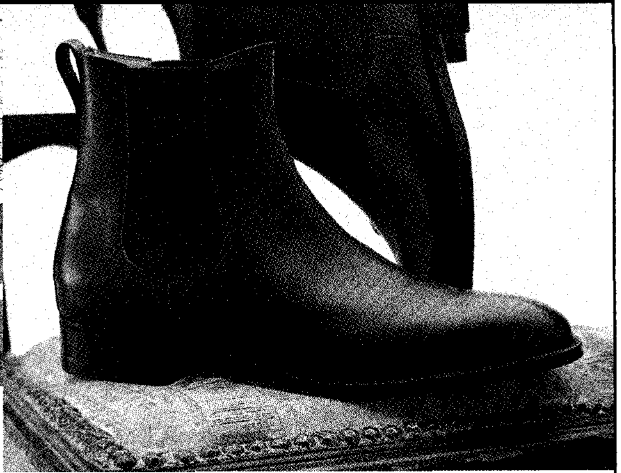
peasant shoe made by hand by Norwegian fishermen when the fish were less than cooperative. Americans touring London originally discovered them there and brought them home. Before anyone could say Oslo, American shoe manufacturers were turning out both slip-on and laced style moccasin-front shoes as fast as machines could sew. While American casual shoe manufacturers continue to turn out this classic slip-on even today, variations on a theme are still being practiced by such companies as Alden, whose timeless tassel slip-on, in suede, smooth leather, or cordovan, took the moccasin style to new, dressier heights.

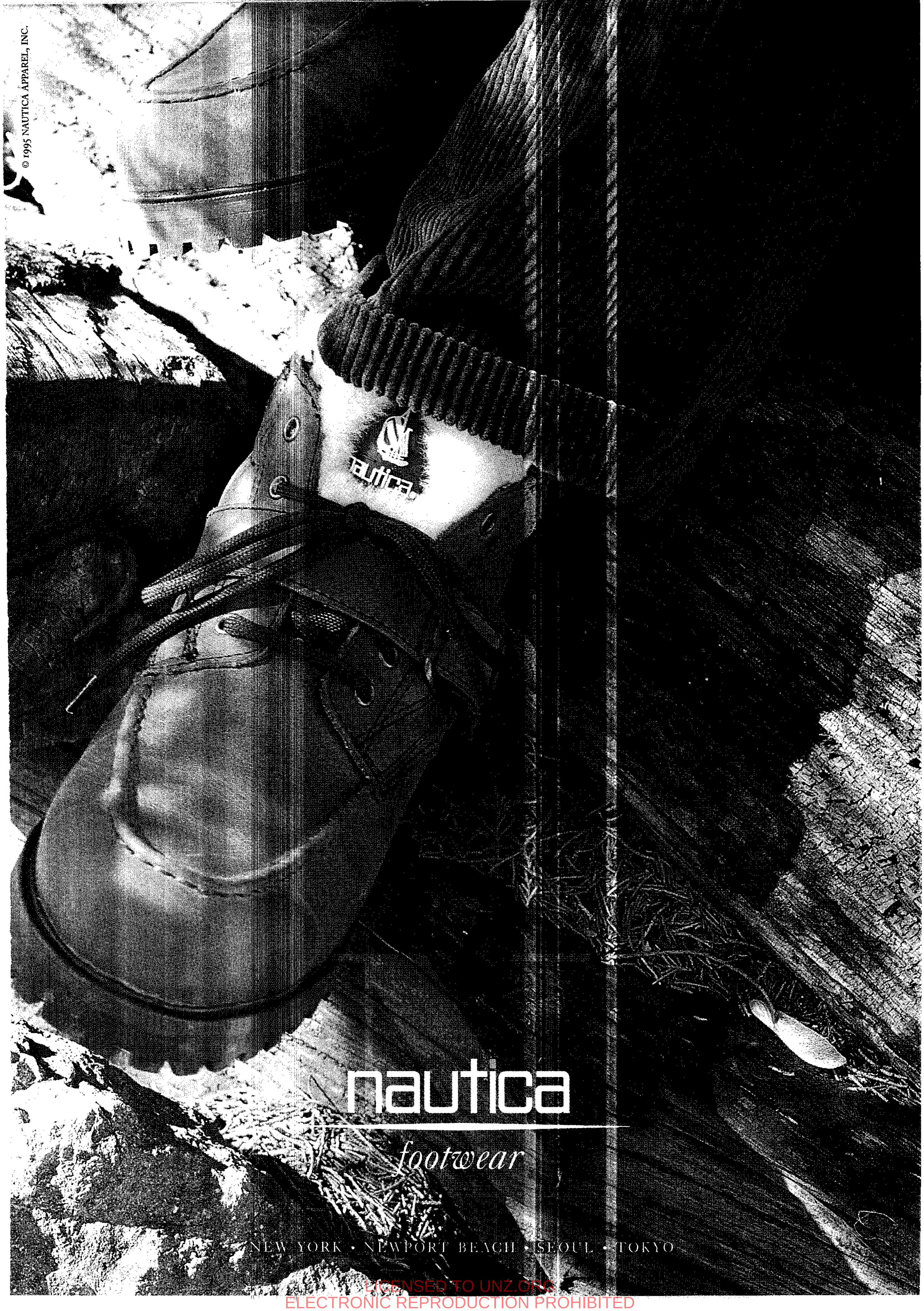
By the beginning of the 1940s, it was clear that dress shoes were being redefined in America. Even shoes worn exclusively for sports began finding their way into men's wardrobes as part of their in-town dress. A classic example of this is the chukka or desert boot, an over-the-ankle boot that fastens with a lace through two eyelets, made of calfskin or suede, and named after the chukker, a playing period in polo. The saddle shoe, a teenage footwear icon in every sense of the word, was originally used for tennis but eventually made an Ivy Leagued path to the greens, where someone had the bright idea that spikes attached to the sole would make for a more solid stance while driving off the tee. They weren't wrong.

As World War II got underway, the War Production Board (WPB), to conserve leather, forced shoe manufacturers to alter the designs of their shoes, and designs soon became simplified, pared-down, and uninteresting. Composition soles were used. Perforated brogues were out because of the layers of extra leather they required. When the war ended, men realized they actually liked the lightness of the WPB regulation shoes that outlawed thick soles and layering. Uncle Sam, once again, helped set a fashion trend.

Above: Buckskin six-eyelet blucher tie with rubber stud bottom by J.P. Tod's. Left: The classic slip-on, with silver horse bit detail, updated for the '90s by Gucci. Below: An elegantly modern variation on the Australian bush boot by Tanino Crisci.



The post-war years also witnessed the rise in popularity of the casual white reverse calf shoe—the classic red-rubber-soled "buck" as they were then called and are referred to today. While the white buck's earliest sartorial manifestation was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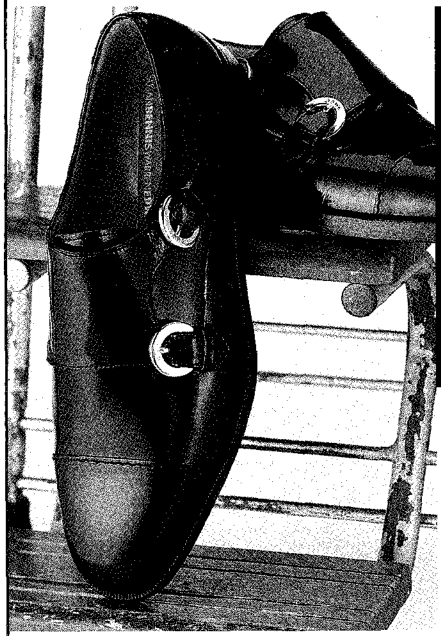
as a complement to resort clothes, resourceful fashion mavens of the day discovered that these simple shoes—always slightly scuffed for that lived-in look—worked equally well with seersucker, tropical worsted, and linen suits for town. Even today, there is no better accompaniment to seersucker or a pair of worked-in khakis. This was the dawn of a new era of casual dress in this country, a period *Esquire* magazine called "American Informal," when men were demanding comfort from their shoes as well as their clothing.

As the 1950s unfolded, a new conservatism ravaged the country politically, and this had profound effects on men's fashion. Suits became slimmer, with more natural lines utilizing less fabric. Shoe styling was likewise restrained, with slimmer lasts trimmed of any superfluous detailing—the perfect foil for the natural lines and pared-down shape of clothing, all part and parcel of the Italian influence that was growing stateside.

As American GIs returned home after the war designers in Europe—particularly the Italians—began looking to American shores to spread their fashion gospel. Italian custom tailors such as Brioni of Rome, whom most fashion pundits credit with forging the "Continental Look" in men's fashion, already had their disciples among American writers, politicians, and some of the Hollywood stars who began filming overseas; if these demanding men could be converted to the slim, "columnar" style of Italian suits such as Brioni's, why not the average American man to Italian shoes, which featured similarly slimmed-down shapes. This reasoning would prove to be altogether sound if not visionary.



A new monk strap design with cap-toe in patent leather by Susan Bennis and Warren Edwards.

By 1955, shoe styling had gone through myriad changes as the Italian invasion took hold in fashion. The new shapes being imported from Italy were leaner and longer, less clunky than those in America, and the uppers were trimmed so that they sat low across the top of the toes. Soles were sliced to a new level of slimness, and higher, slightly stacked heels prevailed. It didn't take American shoe manufacturers very long to retool their factories with an Italian accent.

As for the '60s and '70s: the less said the better as far as shoe design goes. (Who would want to remember clogs?) Yet in terms of construction, the '60s are important if only for the fact that shoe manufacturers during this period developed ways to produce the softest shoes men had ever known. The "Peacock Revolution" spawned new designs born of a rock 'n' roll sensibility, the most illustrious being the "Beatle boot" and its many incarnations, radical and otherwise.

> "Before anyone could say Oslo, American shoe manufacturers were turning out both slip-on and laced style moccasins as fast as machines could sew."

In Italy, and to a degree in England and France, shoemaking has always been considered an art form; a hand-worked craft handed down in families for generations. Many of today's most

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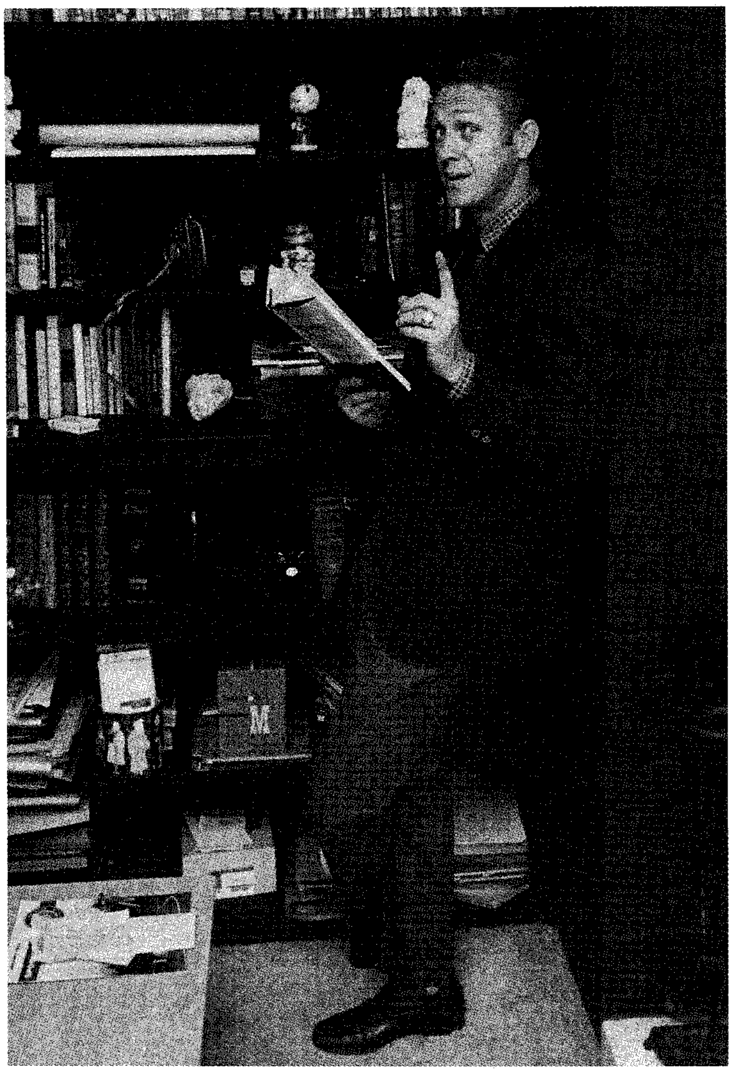

Steve McQueen, December '61

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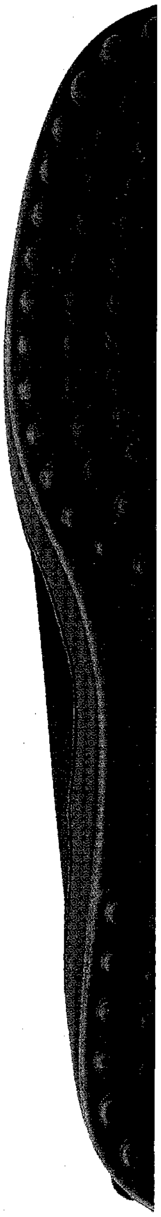

> "Many of today's most famous Italian names in fine quality shoes began with a patriarch who made custom shoes for the wealthy aristocracy."

famous and prestigious Italian names in fine quality hand-made shoes began with a patriarch cobbling out his existence by making custom shoes for the wealthy aristocracy. Manufacturers such as Tanino Crisci, Gucci, Fratelli Rossetti, and A. Testoni, to name just a few, have, for decades, set the standards in the way proper gentlemen's shoes should be made. Indeed the work of these firms is truly state-of-the-art in precision and handcraftsmanship. Collectively, they build shoes to last a lifetime, which makes the high price tag of their work relatively palatable. These are shoes best thought of as an investment, one that can pay dividends with proper care.

Apart from the high quality and artful craftsmanship of their shoes, Italian footwear classicists also continue to champion new ideas in style and design, creating shoes that never give up comfort. Young upstart designers such as Diego Della Valle, have demonstrated a keen eye for innovation utilizing the latest in technology. With his J.P. Tod's collection, Della Valle has managed to marry casualness and sophistication in inimitable Italian style. Who else could have created a soft-sided shoe with rubber buttons on the bottom of the sole and up the back of the heel specifically for driving? And who else but Italians would have the fashion courage to wear them with tweeds and cuffed flannels without even having a driver's license?

Credit is due the Italians for restoring the high standards America knew in men's shoes before and just after World War II and for inspiring young designers stateside, such as the formidable creative team of Susan Bennis and Warren Edwards, to forge new, cutting-edge ideas in men's shoes without sacrificing quality workmanship in the process.

In 1966 Gucci almost single-handedly revived interest in the slip-on style in the modern era with their silver horse-bit-trim-across-the-vamp model. Copied all over the world, albeit in lesser versions, the Gucci slip-on has become an international icon

Above left: Moccasin style slip-ons with vamp detailing in genuine ostrich by Brioni. Right: Vintage-looking cap toe blucher tie with burnished finish by Cable & Co.

A Balanced [redacted] Wardrobe

A well-balanced shoe wardrobe should be able to take a man through the whole year.

An opening word of advice: slip-on styles such as tassle loafers and moccasins should never be worn with suits. Lace-ups or a plain monk strap are the only proper shoes for suits.

The key items for the well-dressed man are two pairs of plain cap-toe oxford lace-ups, one in deep brown or mahogany, and one in black. This shoe style is never wrong. Wear black only with navy, charcoal, or black suits, brown with everything else, including navy or charcoal. A pair of brown perforated wing-tips, either as an oxford or blucher tie, will go with most suits. A classic monk strap, either in leather or suede, makes a great blazer shoe and is always a great match for sportcoats. A tassle loafer also is versatile enough for any sportcoat. The more casual or softly constructed the style, the more dressed down the rest of the clothing. Loafers and suede shoes are not appropriate for dressier evening events.

A simple slip-on, either plain as a penny loafer or with metal detailing across the instep, is acceptable for blazer dressing or a sportcoat and trousers. If a budget allows, it is advisable to have one of each.

Finally, for formal dressing, the well-balanced wardrobe will contain either an oxford style lace-up, in patent or smooth black leather, or pumps, either in patent or velvet. Owning both a lace-up and a pump is always advisable ■

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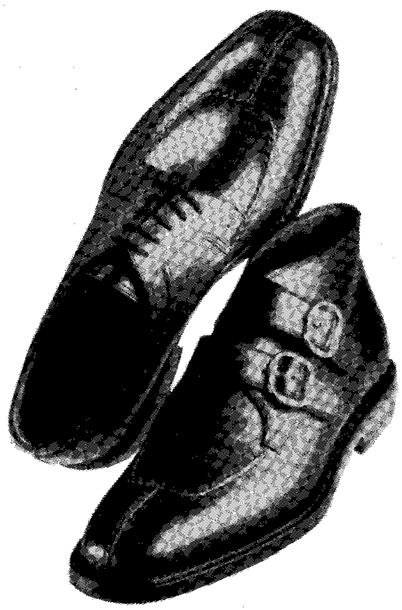

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in footwear design. Perhaps even more remarkable was that Gucci even managed to win over the Wall Street executives who took to wearing the slip-on with their chalk- and pin-stripe suits. The classic American wing-tip took flight during the anything goes '60s. Even today, nine-to-five businessmen who wear what has come to be known as the "corporate uniform" opt for slip-ons à la Gucci. And Italy deserves the credit.

Stateside, start-up companies such as Cable & Co., and more recently, David Chu for Nautica are intent on trying to restore an equitable price/value relationship with their collections and, in turn, revive the American shoe industry, just as London's Edward Green, whose shoes are sold exclusively in the New York men's store, Paul Stuart, has led the way back for British hand-cobblers. J.M. Weston in Paris has brought recognition in shoe design back to the City of Light with its collection of high-quality, stylish dress and casual shoes that have outpaced the popularity of French men's ready-to-wear.

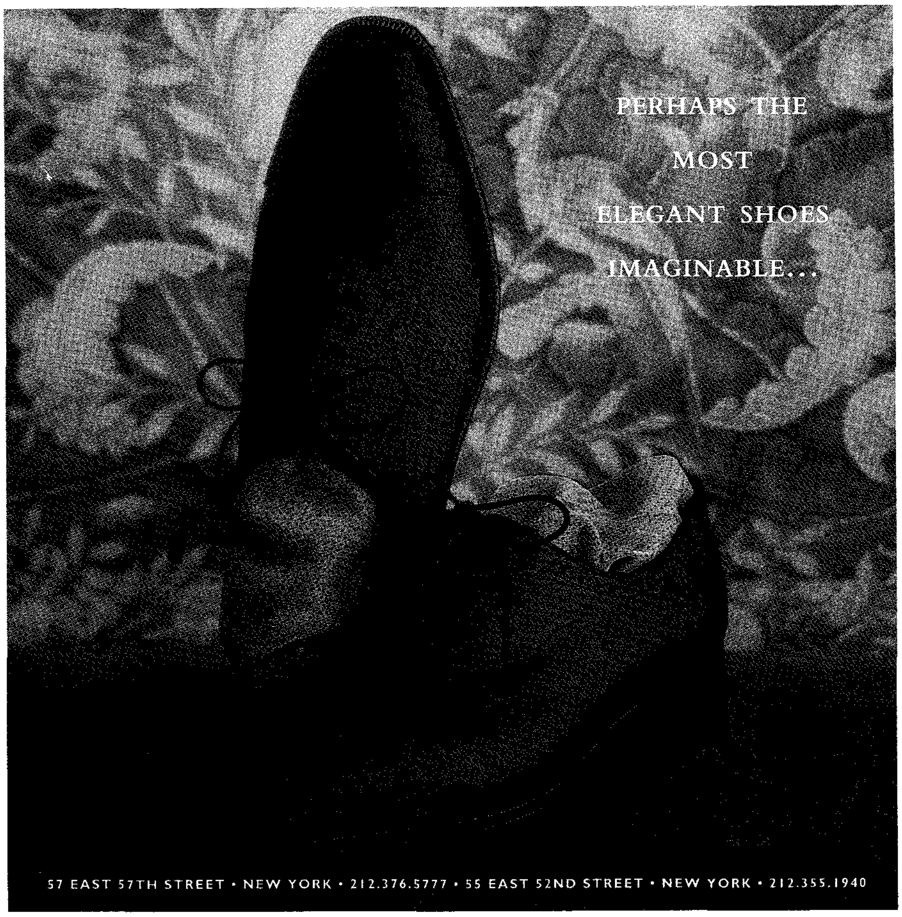
Above left: Princely full brogue suede oxford lace-ups by Edward Green for Paul Stuart. Right: Buckskin monk strap with rubberized sole by Nautica.

The American dress shoe industry, save for a smattering of healthy companies in New England, the South, and the Midwest, has faced difficult times, but it does appear that it may well be on the road to a comeback. Popular sentiment agrees that the Europeans have been the saving grace of the shoe business on both sides of the Atlantic, and there are no doubt scores of American men better-heeled for it. And possibly even healthier, since better-made shoes will do more for a man's feet than poorly made ones. Despite the American Podiatry Association's contention that "a new pair of shoes will not make feet

Recognizing [redacted] Quality

The best shoes have uppers made of calf or of kidskin, a leather tanned from young goats that is unusually soft and lightweight. The shoes' linings will also be made of leather, which makes for the best cushion and is the slowest conductor of heat. Fine, quality shoes also feature hand- or bench-made welt construction as opposed to machine nailing or stitching. Welt construction dates back to 15th-century western Europe and consists of a narrow one-quarter inch leather strip sandwiched in, and hand-sewn to, the upper, insole, and outer sole. The highest quality shoes employ "full" welt construction, which extends the process completely around the shoe. The well-crafted heel will have layers of leather that are discernible to the eye. This sandwiching effect provides the greatest strength and cushion.

Well-made shoes also have clean, close stitchwork throughout, with smooth seams that meet perfectly. Any telltale signs of glue on a shoe means inferior quality, as do rough spots or uneven or raised seams. Lastly, fine shoes always have a noticeable curve in the last—the foot-shaped form or model on which the shoe is made—much like the natural, wide curve of a foot. Straight and narrow lasts usually betray poorly made, machine-molded shoes that will be uncomfortable after a couple of hours of wear. Best to throw those back. ■



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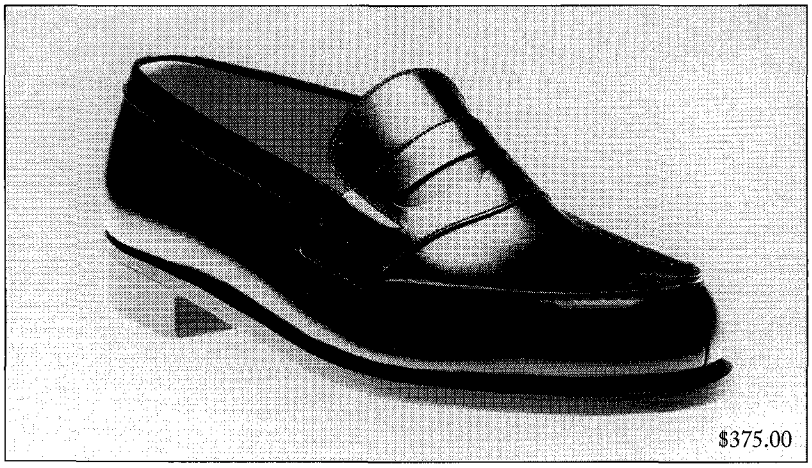

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well any more than a new hat will cure a headache," a quality properly fitted shoe will distribute and balance body weight and motion stress over a broader surface, thereby reducing foot problems rather than increasing them. A fun fact: There are 26 bones, 107 ligaments, and 19 muscles moving in each foot as a man strolls a street, be it Madison Avenue, the Champs Élysées, or the Via Montenapoleone.

> "In some ways the Europeans have been the saving grace of the shoe industry and there are no doubt scores of American men better heeled for it."

In his lifetime, a man may walk as much as 115,000 miles. Small wonder then, that Leonardo da Vinci, no stranger to the theory that necessity is the mother of invention, and a master of anatomy, called the foot a "masterpiece of engineering and a work of art." And if fine quality, well-crafted shoes go further in preserving the two works of art below a man's trouser cuffs, it is an indulgence anyone should be able to live with.

CARE AND MAINTENANCE

Given the escalating cost of fine gentlemen's shoes today, it is more than a little advisable to preserve one's investment. With proper care and maintenance, quality shoes should last a lifetime, or even longer (the English are notorious for passing on their footwear). A good cleaning with a transparent wax, even before new shoes are worn, is a good idea. This is a preventive step that will keep dirt from staining the shoes and wayward pebbles or stones from scratching the exterior. Wax is also the best safeguard against rain and moisture, which can be deadly to fine leather. Avoid cleaners or conditioners in spray form, particularly those that have silicone–a chemical that can lead to cracks in the shoe surface.

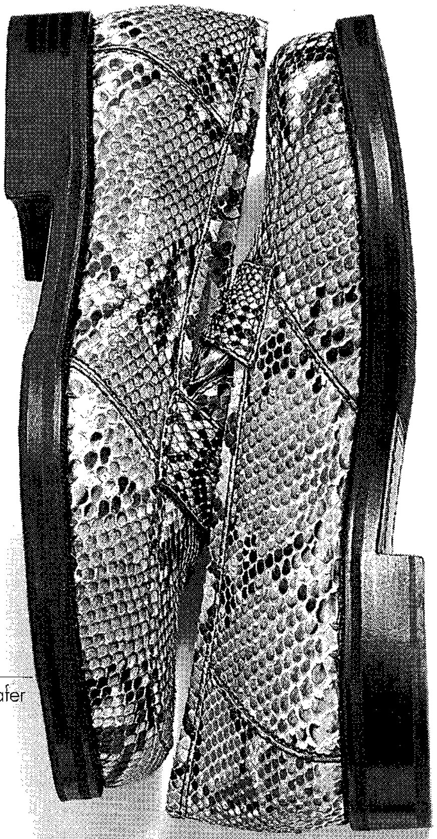
After a certain amount of wearing, saddle soap works wonders for removing stains and is an excellent conditioner, especially for boots. Cleaning oils, such as mink, will condition fine leather and help bring out the luster in shoes dulled from the elements. For suede, a steel brush works best for restoring the nap, but always brush in one direction. A standard gum eraser works reasonably well on fresh stains. For Nubuck, a brisk brushing with a stiff, natural hair brush is best.

For ensuring that shoes retain their natural shape, wooden shoe trees are worth their weight in cedar. And finally, the easiest and surest way to maintain the condition of a shoe collection is to alternate pairs every few days to give each time to air out and the insides to dry. Dampness only promotes bacteria growth, which will eat through linings over time. ■

Getting a [redacted] Proper Fit

Shoe size is never a static measurement, since sizes will vary with the style of a particular shoe or a manufacturer's last. It is also true that rarely are both feet the same size, so it is important to have each measured and then buy for the larger foot. Contrary to popular wisdom, shoes don't stretch all that much and any tightness during an initial try-on is not likely to disappear. It usually means blisters at the end of the day. The most important thing to notice about the fit of new shoes is that they should fit like old shoes. To make it simple, new shoes should feel comfortable the minute they're tried on, with the widest part of the shoe at the ball of the foot and the narrowest at the back where it should cradle the heel.

Since shoes are made for walking, it is best to have one's foot size measured while standing, which flattens the toes and makes for a truer measurement. The best time for trying on shoes is early afternoon, when feet have had a chance to swell slightly. Proper length dictates that there should be about one-quarter to one-half inch of space between the longest toe and the tip of the shoe. A bit more room may be allowed for lace-up styles, since they can always be tied tighter. For slip-ons, less room in front is desirable since slippage can occur and cause irritation. There should be a reasonable amount of flexibility in the toe area as well as at the back of the heel ■



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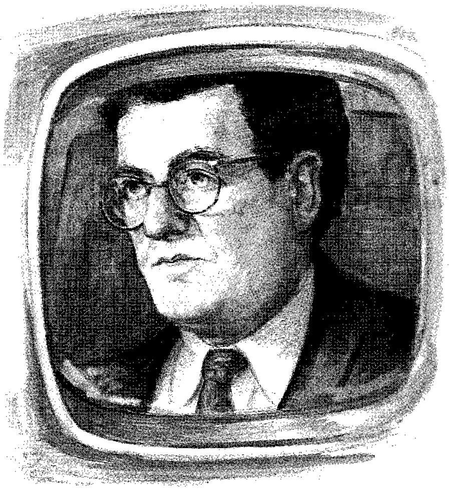
THE NEGOTIATOR

Richard Holbrooke knows how to bully and beguile—an excellent job qualification for brokering peace in the Balkans.

BY MICHAEL KELLY

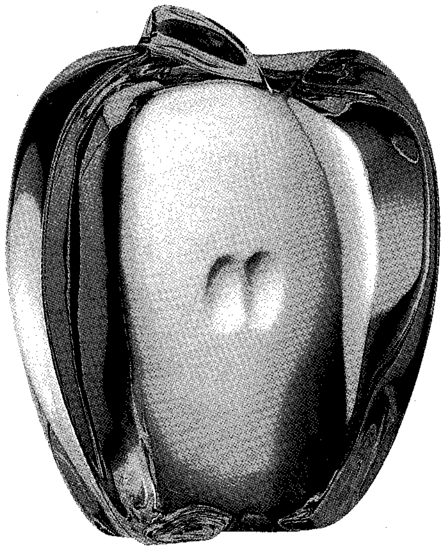


Holbrooke: "You have to ask yourself why they ever gave me the job."

TOM LULEVICH

THIS week, unless things fall apart in the last minutes, Secretary of State Warren Christopher will open peace talks among President Franjo Tudjman of Croatia, President Alija Izetbegovic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia. The Clinton Administration hopes that the discussions, which are to be held at the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, in Dayton, Ohio, will lead to formal peace negotiations, and from there to peace itself, enforced by a NATO Implementation Force of up to seventy thousand troops, which would include between twenty and twenty-five thousand American soldiers. The Dayton talks will be the crowning achievement to date of several months of headlong diplomacy led by Richard Holbrooke, the Assistant Secretary of State for European and Canadian Affairs. Since August 14th, Holbrooke, leading a six-person delegation, has been caroming from Washington to Zagreb to Belgrade to Sarajevo to Moscow to Washington, striking deal after deal. Each transaction has built on its predecessors: first, an agreement in principle that a postwar Bosnia would be a sort of portmanteau state, a single country comprising two entities, a Muslim-Croat federation and a Serbian republic; second, a lifting of the siege of Sarajevo, the Bosnian capital; third, the outlining of a political and a constitutional structure for postwar Bosnia; fourth, a general ceasefire and an agreement to hold direct talks among the leaders of Bosnia, Serbia, and Croatia.

To a considerable degree, what has been accomplished reflects the will and the nature of one man. Although the American diplomatic efforts have been vastly aided by external factors—by NATO's new willingness to use lethal force against the Serbs, by the election of a more tough-minded government in France, and by the pressures brought by the battlefield successes of the Bosnian and Croat military forces this summer and fall—the single force most responsible for driving the negotiations onward has been the ego of Richard Holbrooke. For Holbrooke, who is fifty-four years old, the Balkan mission is the Kissingerian role of a lifetime that has been spent in the pursuit of power and attention. He has played this role—the superdiplomat in the central crisis of the age—in a manner that anyone who has ever known him would instantly recognize as classically Holbrookean. He has yelled at Foreign Ministers and cursed at a President. He has negotiated agreements of immense consequence on the fly, making them up as he goes along and always pushing for closure, betting on himself and the deal in hand at two o'clock in the morning. He has politely negotiated with killers and, by his own account, at least one psychopath—the Bosnian Serb General Ratko Mladic, whom he calls a madman. He has risked his life a number of times. (Three of the original members of the Holbrooke delegation



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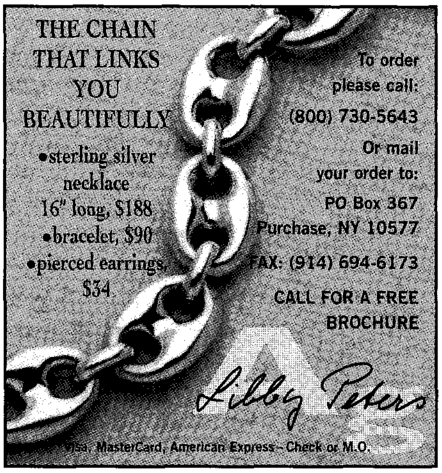

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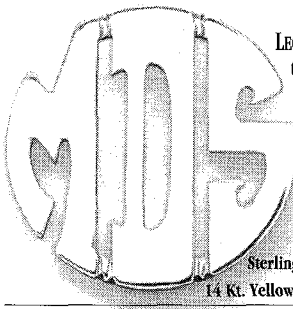

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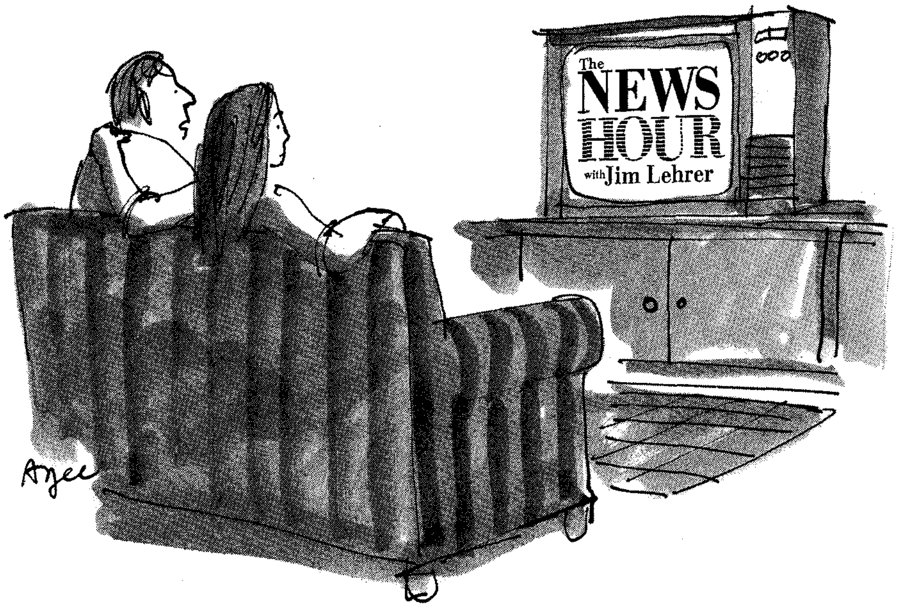
died in the first week of the mission, when the armored personnel carrier in which they were travelling slid off the road over Mt. Igman to Sarajevo and plunged almost two thousand feet.) He has shamelessly and effectively exploited the media, capitalizing on their natural attraction to indiscretion and to swagger, in order to promote American policy aims and to intimidate those who stood in the way. He has also led the United States into a tangle of accords and commitments whose ramifications, both practical and moral, no one—including the man who made them—fully understands.

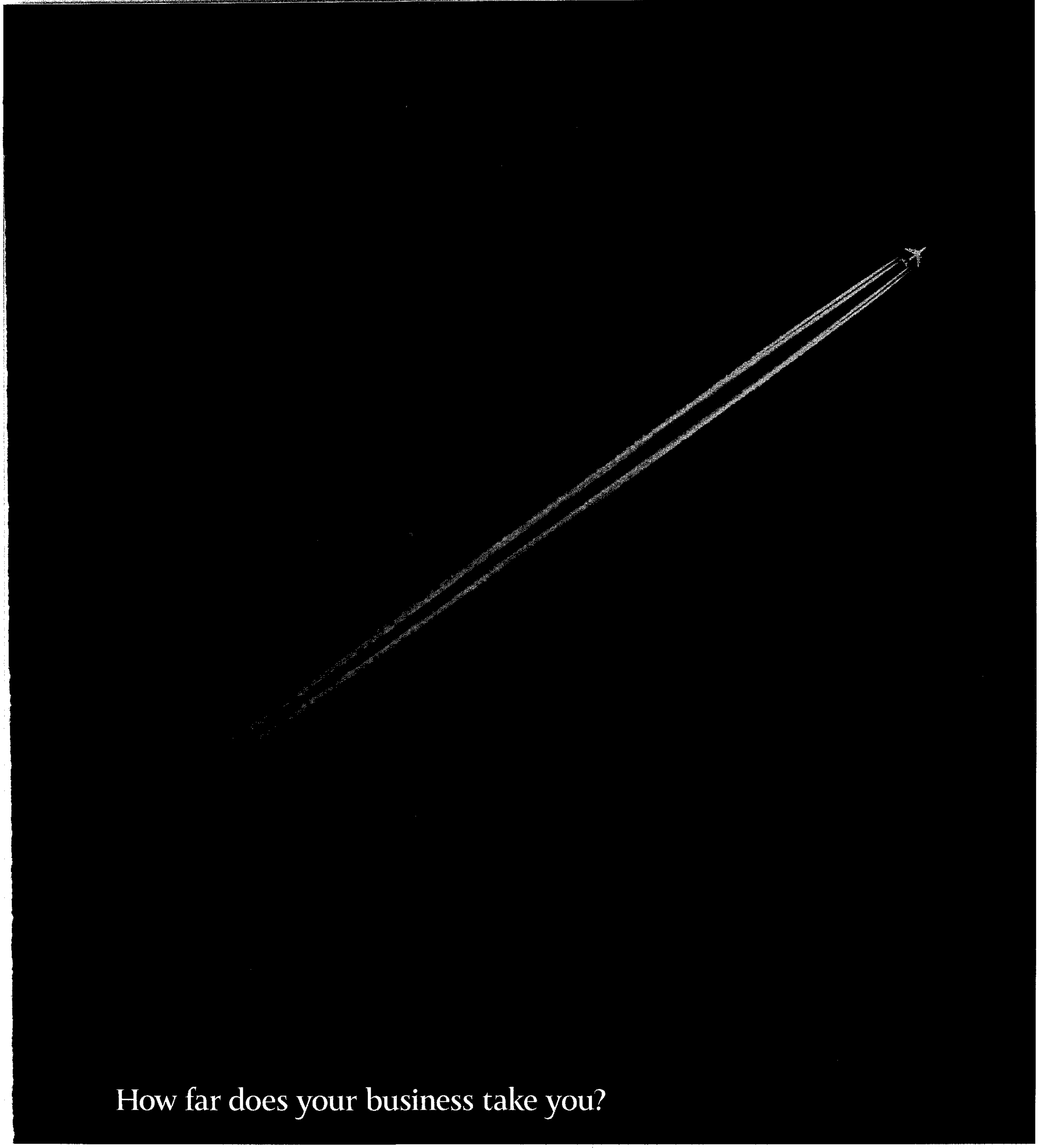
UNDERSTANDING how Holbrooke has been able to do what he has done begins with understanding why he was almost not given the chance to do so. Holbrooke loves to talk, and his talk often has a seamless circularity, tending to come around again and again to the subject of Holbrooke, so that the answer to a simple question—when did he begin to concern himself with the Balkans?—comes out like a sort of poem of the first-person pronoun:

> I remember when
> I first became involved, it was in August of 1992.
> I went on an International Rescue Committee trip, and
> We drove down through this wasteland, and
> I didn't know much about the area, but
> I was fascinated by the horrors of it.
> We went down to Banja Luka through this wasteland
> Everything shot up
> And the world hadn't realized
> And it was a staggering thing.
> I'd been in Indochina and the Mideast and Cambodia, but
> I had never seen a thing like this.
> It was much different from the destruction in Asia; it was so personal.
> We stayed in Banja Luka and
> We saw ethnic cleansing of the milder variety,
> People being loaded at gunpoint on the trucks—
> No, not trucks, buses—
> With suitcases, after signing away their property.
> And this was before "Schindler's List" came out, but
> I thought later it was scenes out of "Schindler's List."
> I filmed it.
> I have videotape of it.
>
> In December
> I went back, and drove from Kiseliak to Sarajevo, and afterward
> I wrote a memo to Tony Lake and Warren Christopher and Sandy Berger,
> A thirteen-page memo with
> My suggestions
>
> I offered to work on this,
> I offered to work on Bosnia, and they never replied to
> My memo.
> I never got a reply. Did
> I tell you about this?
> Never a reply, they went into their thing and they never called
> Me and never asked
> My opinion on Bosnia.
> So there is a certain irony in
> My being involved in it now.

Actually, the ironies are several. When Bill Clinton was elected President, there was no doubt that Richard Holbrooke



"I never knew who was who until the other one left."



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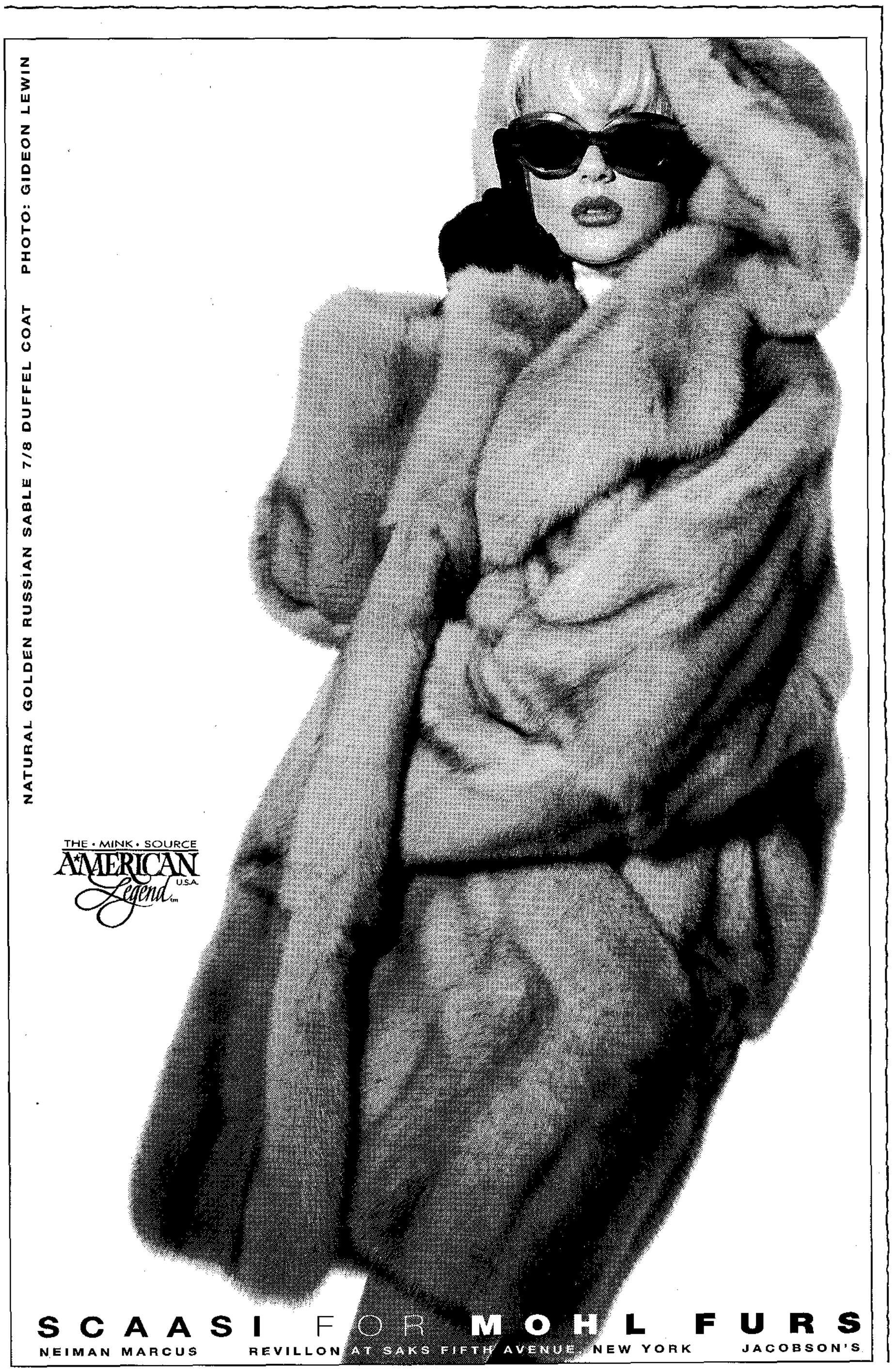
would be appointed to a good job in his Administration. Holbrooke was a thirty-year foreign-policy veteran with impressive credentials (foreign-service officer in Vietnam and member of the American delegation to the Paris peace talks; special assistant to two Under-Secretaries of State; and Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs under Jimmy Carter). He was also a thoroughbred of the foreign-policy establishment (board member and director of the Council on Foreign Relations, managing editor of *Foreign Policy*, director of publications for the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace) and a friend of many members of the upper class of Democratic politics (Pamela Harriman, Clark Clifford) and the media (Diane Sawyer, Tom Brokaw, Time Warner's Norman Pearlstine). He counted among his longtime friends three men who would assume high positions in the Clinton foreign-policy structure: the national-security adviser Anthony Lake, Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott, and Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs Peter Tarnoff.

But Holbrooke had a large problem. The very traits that had enabled him to build such a fine résumé made him hated by many of his peers in Washington. He was disliked not because he was different—Holbrooke's character is the character of political Washington itself—but because he was so naked and so clumsy in his display of that character. There is an adolescent quality to both the admirable and the less admirable aspects of Holbrooke—his perpetual self-aggrandizement, his hyperactive ambition, his immense energy, his hunger for public triumph, his stagy brilliance, his bullying, beseeching ways—and this quality naturally grates on the nerves of more polished players, who look at Holbrooke and see themselves as in a glass, coarsely.

The sin of excessive obviousness had been costly to Holbrooke when—after a lucrative career on Wall Street during the Reagan-Bush era—he advertised himself in his memo to the senior foreign-policy advisers of the incoming Clinton Administration. He was indeed appointed to good jobs—Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany in 1993, and Assistant Secretary of State for European and Canadian Affairs in 1994—but they were a step removed from the highest circles of policy and the closer attention of cameras. In these posts, Holbrooke rested restlessly, not out of the action, precisely, but not at its center, either, as the Administration dithered around the edges of a burning Bosnia. He wrote memos criticizing the government's inaction, and urged the use of more force. In private, and occasionally even in public, he bitterly denounced the Administration for standing by as war crimes of historic proportions were committed. He was largely ignored, which was the worst punishment that could have been inflicted on him. By the spring of 1995, a frustrated, unhappy Holbrooke was halfway out of the Administration, and was reportedly reconsidering a return to Wall Street. A friend says that he was bitter in a way that only an egoist can be. "He looked around at the competition, and said to himself, 'Hell, why are they the Secretary of State and the national-security adviser? Why wasn't I?' "

Then, in July, Bosnian Serb forces under the control of Mladic invaded the United Nations-designated "safe areas" of Zepa and Srebrenica, in central Bosnia, killing on a genocidal scale, and demonstrating conclusively the fail-


NATURAL GOLDEN RUSSIAN SABLE 7/8 DUFFEL COAT PHOTO: GIDEON LEWIN

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NEIMAN MARCUS REVILLON AT SAKS FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK JACOBSON'S

ure of the American and United Nations approach in the Balkans. "Bosnia was hanging over us like a great cloud, and it was getting worse," a senior Administration official recalls. "We were sitting there saying to ourselves, 'We have got to come to grips with this damned thing or it will kill us.' The ceasefire that Jimmy Carter negotiated last December had utterly deteriorated. Sarajevo was taking up to nine hundred shells a day. The Serbs were moving on the Muslim enclaves. The Europeans were at their wits' end, and ready to quit. We were faced with the worst possible outcome: we were going to have to initiate the evacuation of the United Nations forces in Bosnia—a move that would be very risky to American life, and expensive, and would lead to a wider war. The fall of Zepa and Srebrenica crystallized this fear."

Against this backdrop, there arose within the Administration what might be called the Somoza (*père*) argument that Holbrooke was the man for the job: "He's a son of a bitch, but he's our son of a bitch." As the theory went, the personality traits that made so many people dislike Holbrooke made him the perfect choice to manage a negotiation process featuring Serbian war criminals, Croatian Reich-builders, and endlessly squabbling Muslims. "There was a lot of opposition to Holbrooke, a lot of opposition in the National Security Council and in the State Department, because he has such a big personality," says the senior Administration official, who argued for Holbrooke's appointment. "The question was asked whether he would be disruptive to the process. My response was that this was a hell of a good reason for hiring him. He would indeed be disruptive. He would shake things up. He would bring great intellectual, and even physical, energy to the process. We needed the wattage."

Holbrooke himself recalls the mood of the moment as one of impending crisis: "Even the most marginally informed person finally realized that the policy was headed for a crash, and that we were headed for military involvement either way, because of the box we had got ourselves into." And he suggests that this climate of approaching doom was what led, ultimately, to the radical notion of putting a persistent critic of the Administration's Balkan policy in charge of Balkan negotiations: "You have to ask yourself why they ever gave me this job."

THE answer to that question may be best exemplified by the story of how Holbrooke achieved a goal that had eluded other would-be peacemakers for three years—the lifting of the siege of Sarajevo. The story, as told by Holbrooke, is predictably self-regarding but also unintentionally revealing.

In the afternoon of September 13th, Holbrooke and his fellow-negotiators arrived for a scheduled meeting with the Serbian President Milosevic at a hunting villa once frequented by Marshal Tito, about thirty miles outside Belgrade. Holbrooke recalls that Milosevic opened the meeting with a peremptory demand: the American diplomat must put a stop to the NATO bombing raids that were ravaging the Bosnian Serbs' Army command structure. It was a complicated moment. As a matter of public posture, there could be no explicit linkage between the American diplomatic efforts to bring peace to the Balkans and the ongoing bombing of the Bosnian Serbs (including, inadvertently, some civilians), which was ostensibly meant to punish the Bosnian Serb military for its murderous shelling of a marketplace in Sarajevo. "We had been asked maybe a thousand times whether the bombing was for the negotiations and whether or not the bombing helps or hurts the negotiations, and our standard answer was always 'That's not for us to say,' " Holbrooke recalled in an interview in Zagreb several days after the Belgrade meeting. "Our position was that the bombing was not for the negotiations, but that if it affects the negotiations so be it. This was not Kissinger and Nixon with Vietnam, where they calibrated the bombing—particularly the Christmas bombing of 1972—for their own negotiation reasons."

Of course, calibrating the bombing for negotiation reasons was exactly what was at issue, but Holbrooke at first maintained a polite fiction to the contrary, telling Milosevic that he had

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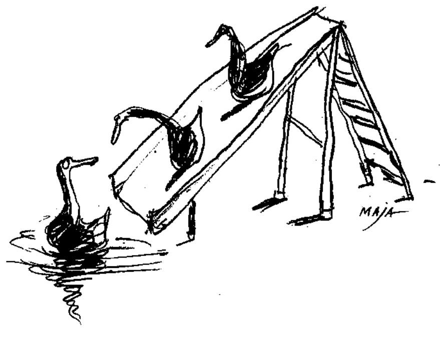
no authority to fulfill his request: "I said, 'That's up to NATO and the U.N.' " Milosevic pressed: "He said, 'No, no, no, no. You're the negotiator, you speak for Clinton, you can turn off the problem.' " Holbrooke demurred a second time, insisting that the power to stop the bombing lay only with the assigned officers of NATO and the United Nations Protection Force in Bosnia. "I said, 'No, I can't. The keys are in Admiral Smith's hands, in Naples, and General Smith's hands, in Sarajevo.' "

Milosevic cut through the charade. "He said, 'What do we have to do?' " Advancing a coy step forward, Holbrooke conceded that he knew Admiral Leighton Smith, an American, and Lieutenant-General Rupert Smith, a Briton, well enough to exert "some marginal influence" on them. He suggested that he would be happy to call both men and intercede on behalf of the Bosnian Serbs—if the Serbs would offer a quid of commensurate size to such a large quo. "We saw at that moment an extraordinary opportunity to negotiate something of immense humanitarian and political value—lifting the siege of Sarajevo," Holbrooke told me. "So we decided, on the spot, to go on. Milosevic and I took a walk around the woods, and when we stopped to look at some longhorn sheep he said, 'I've got to get the bombing stopped.' " Holbrooke, sensing the moment, abruptly dropped the pretenses. "I said, 'You can't do it unless there is compliance on the opening of the Sarajevo airport.' "

Milosevic was ready with a surprise: the Bosnian Serb leaders, President Radovan Karadzic and General Ratko Mladic—the men who controlled the troops and guns surrounding Sarajevo—were only a few hundred yards away in a neighboring villa, waiting to join the negotiations. The American negotiators had always expected that sooner or later they would have to meet the Bosnian Serb leaders, and Holbrooke had the blessing of Tony Lake to do so. But meeting with indicted war criminals—both Karadzic and Mladic have been charged with committing genocide by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia—is a dicey business. Holbrooke agreed to the meeting, but only if the Bosnian Serb leaders were treated as part of Milosevic's delegation, and not as independent representatives. Milosevic accepted the fig leaf, and the Serbian Foreign Minister went off to fetch Karadzic and Mladic. "We stood on the patio, and after fifteen minutes the cars came, two Mercedeses roaring up, and we saw them open," Holbrooke recalled. "It was late afternoon, and against the tree line I could see the unmistakable shock of light hair of Karadzic and the combat fatigues of the burly Mladic."

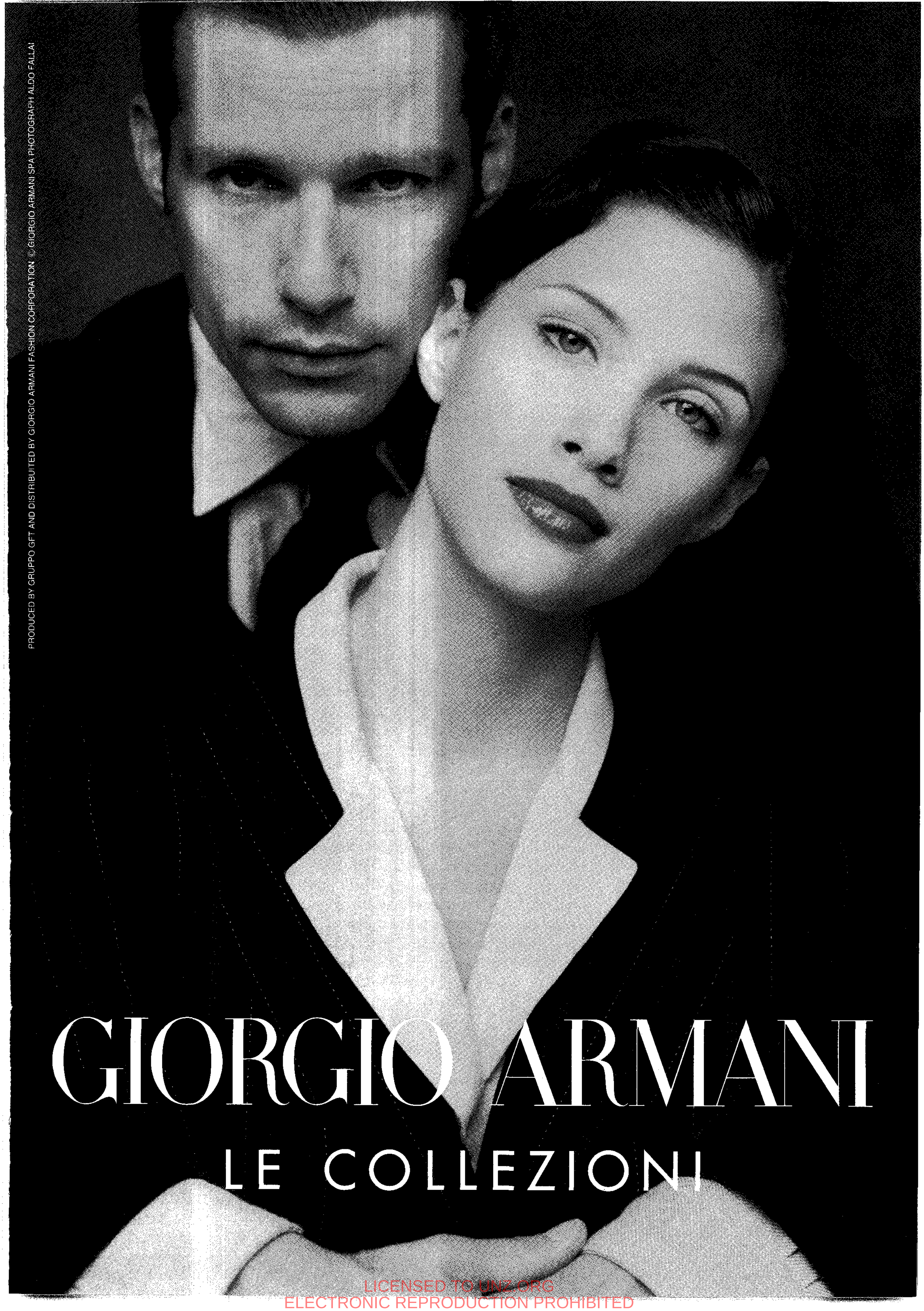
The Americans retreated for ten minutes and prepared themselves while Milosevic briefed the Bosnian Serbs. "We agreed that we would adopt a tone of pure negotiation, pure argument, nothing personal," Holbrooke said. "The handshake issue was very tricky. I told each member of our delegation that it was an individual decision as to whether he was willing to shake hands with these men." (Holbrooke did not make an obvious issue of not shaking, but neither did he shake.) The negotiators returned to the patio, sat down at a table, and began to deal. The discussion, which was heated, centered on the question of what the Bosnian Serbs had to do to get NATO to stop bombing them. "It was about NATO and how the Serb people were getting slaughtered," Holbrooke said. "They went on and on about the Tomahawk cruise missiles—oh, how they hated the Tomahawks!"

After a couple of acrimonious hours, the talks appeared ready to break down completely, and Holbrooke pointedly suggested to Milosevic that they were beginning to seem like a total waste of time. This, Holbrooke says, pushed Karadzic to a crucial capitulation—a proposal that Lieutenant General Wesley Clark, who was representing the Pentagon in the Holbrooke delegation, "draw up the particulars of how we might implement a ceasefire and a cessation of bombing." For the next eight hours, Clark and his fellow delegation members worked with the Bosnian Serb negotiators to draft the document while Holbrooke chatted with Milosevic and conferred with Washington. "We kept working on it, and cleaning it up, and finally, at two in the morning, we had a document," Holbrooke said.



The terms of the deal were dictated and drafted largely by the Americans. "We wrote the document," Holbrooke said flatly. But Holbrooke was careful to package the agreement in a tissue of niceties which would preserve the myth that the document had been a Serbian proposal, with the Americans acting merely as its conveyor, and which would give Holbrooke and his colleagues a very short arm's-length distance from the distasteful reality of having negotiated with war criminals. "I rejected the request that it be a joint U.S.-Serb document," Holbrooke recalled. "I said I was not going to negotiate with the Bosnian Serbs. I rejected a second request that I witness the document, as Milosevic, Karadzic, and Mladic had done. I would not put my signature to it, although my fingerprints were literally on it."

By the time Holbrooke and his colleagues left the villa, at close to 3 A.M., they had accomplished a great deal: the beginnings of an agreement that would end the siege of Sarajevo and would lead within weeks to a general ceasefire in Bosnia and the first concrete steps toward a more durable political and military arrangement. To do this, the American negotiators had been obliged to waltz around the morally troubling issues of negotiating with war criminals and of linking diplomatic aims to the bombing of people with whom the United States was not at war. They had worked at a manic pace and in a somewhat haphazard manner, not knowing entirely what they were doing. (A drafting error at 2 A.M. would have allowed the Bosnian Serb troops ringing Sarajevo to keep some of their deadliest guns in place, and the final document was insufficiently clear on several questions of physical access to and from Sarajevo—both matters that caused confusion and had to be resolved later.) And what Holbrooke and his team had accomplished raised a number of unanswerable questions: When one starts dealing with war criminals, where does one stop? How can the United States serve as the eventual impartial guaran-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tor of a negotiated peace in Bosnia if it is so clearly on one side of the war? What, exactly, defines the American mission in Bosnia? But neither the moral ambiguities nor the mistakes nor any of the prickly questions stopped the deal from going forward, or even slowed it down.

CARDINAL

Over the years, among the fallen, the survived,
The mad, the helpless, the drunken, the unachieved,
I see what it is to make a tiny flicker,
A New England barn glimpsed in summer,
A red sign rising among the green,
Like the cardinal posed on the bird feeder this morning,
God knows between where and where, fall coming,
Winter about to swing its brutish cubes,
And the cardinal here in its light landing.

—Howard Moss
(1922-1987)

James Pardew, a member of the Holbrooke delegation, who is the director of the Balkan Task Force at the Department of Defense, argues that the sorts of traits Holbrooke evinced during the meeting at Tito's villa—conniving, playacting, seizing opportunities by instinct—have been essential to the success of the entire mission. "He could not do what he does without his ability to manipulate people," Pardew says. "He knows what emotions to play and when to play them. He has a clear feeling for the decisive moment, for what he needs to do to bring the thing to closure."

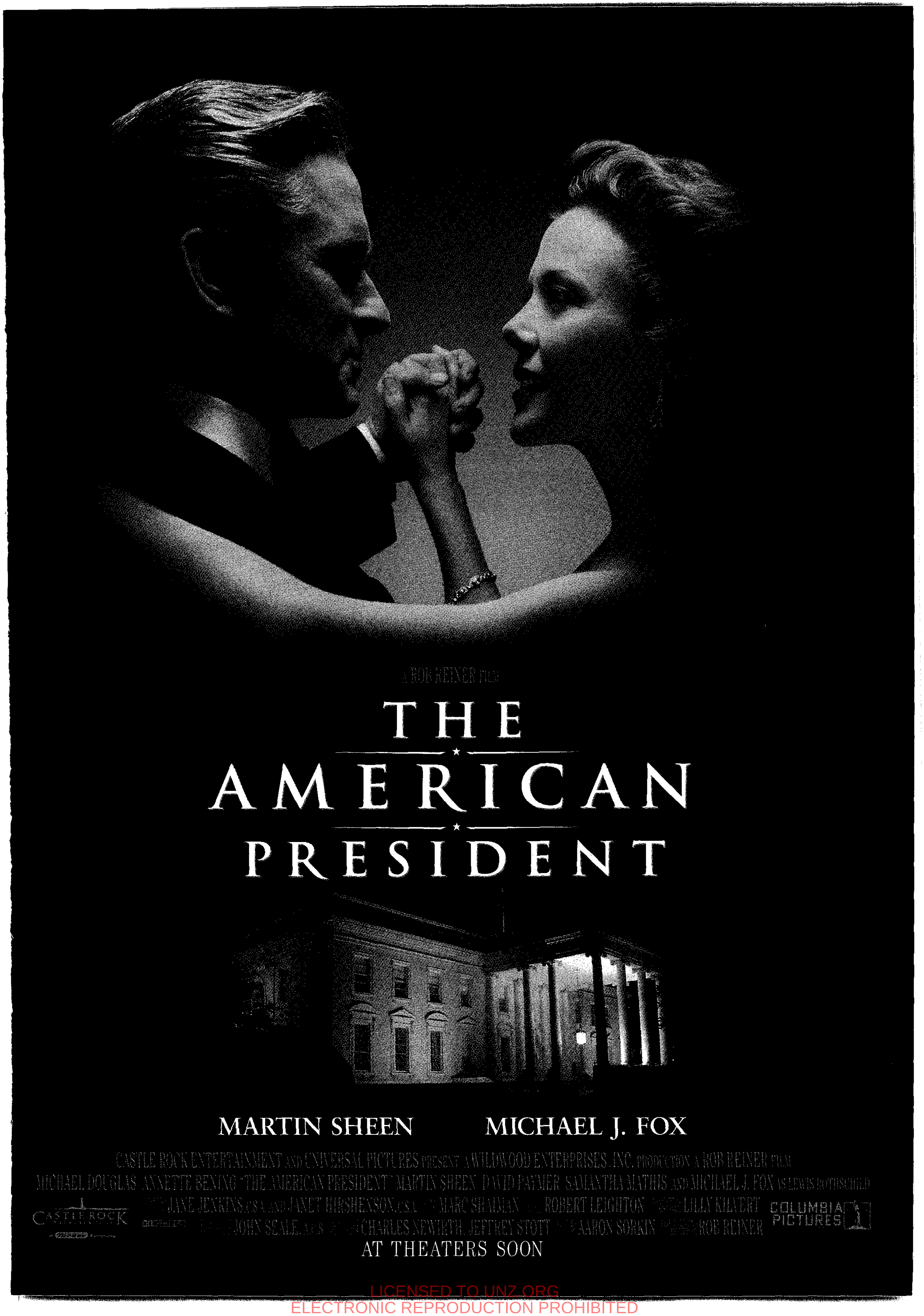
Another American negotiator, Brigadier General Donald L. Kerrick, who is the director of the National Military Intelligence Collection Center, describes how Holbrooke manipulates even members of his own delegation, deploying them as props in what he likes to call the "theatre" of negotiation. "He uses us in different ways at different times, depending on what the occasion calls for," Kerrick says. "A classic example of this was when we were trying to get the Bosnians to agree to a general ceasefire. They were balking, because their senior military people were telling them they could gain more territory from the Serbs with another week or so of fighting. When we went in to the meeting, Dick said to Izetbegovic, 'I have brought General Kerrick with me. He is the finest military-intelligence officer in the United States government.' He goes on like this for some time, blowing smoke. Then he says, 'General Kerrick has done a special survey of the military situation on the ground, has carefully analyzed all the data.' He turns to me, and says, 'General Kerrick, please give us the results of your analysis.' So I tell Izetbegovic that it is our view that his forces can hold what they have got, but they cannot gain much more, and may even lose some of what they have got now, because we have seen the Serbs moving heavy matériel into position to support the Bosnian Serbs." Kerrick says that none of these claims were false—just hyped in their presentation. "Dick was just presenting it in a way to maximize its effect, and it worked," he says.

Holbrooke's effectiveness goes beyond mere stagecraft, however. His essential talent in these negotiations has been, in the words of one State Department official, an ability to "maintain a certain amount of authority and control by matching himself to the style of the person he is with." As an example, the official offers Holbrooke's approach to dealing with Muhamed Sacirbey, the Bosnian Foreign Minister. "Sacirbey has a very aggressive personality, and will quite literally shout at a moment's notice," the official says. "Holbrooke will scream right back at him."

On September 24th, the day before a meeting in New York among the Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian Foreign Ministers to negotiate an agreement in principle for a collective Presidency and a constitutional court in postwar Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Bosnians announced they were dissatisfied with the draft document that was the basis of the American-brokered deal. Holbrooke, who was already in New York for the meeting, met with Sacirbey in a suite at the Waldorf-Astoria. "It got very hot very fast," the State Department official says. "Sacirbey stormed out of the suite. The two of them cornered each other right outside the door, and continued to yell at each other face to face. It got to the point where it looked as if they were going to punch each other. The following day, they were working with each other as pleasantly as can be." Holbrooke spent the next forty hours playing brinkmanship with Belgrade and Sarajevo, and in the end the Bosnians signed.

Holbrooke's talent for playing off, and playing with, the personalities of others is at the heart of the triangle that is crucial to the entire negotiation process—a three-way relationship involving Holbrooke, Milosevic, and Karadzic and Mladic. The relationship effectively began on August 31st, when Milosevic delivered to Holbrooke's delegation the so-called Patriarch Paper. The agreement, which had been signed by Milosevic and Karadzic, Mladic and other Bosnian Serb leaders, and had been witnessed by the patriarch of the Serb Orthodox Church, made Milosevic the head of a joint Serb-and-Bosnian Serb negotiating team, with the power to cast the deciding vote in the event of a disagreement. Holbrooke calls the letter "the breakthrough that ended sixteen months of stalemate."

What has developed since is a contest among three powerfully self-interested parties, each intriguing against the others. For example, Milosevic is theoretically supposed to represent the interests of the Bosnian Serbs as much as he does those of Serbia. In reality, however, as Christopher Hill, another member of the American delegation, points out, Milosevic has decided that "Serbia can do very well in Europe within its own borders, and Serbia does not have to be the guarantor of the future of the Bosnian Serbs." The decision wasn't difficult, according to Hill. "The choice between a Greater Serbia and a



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Greater Slobodan was easy in his mind," he says.

In theory also, the United States does not recognize Karadzic and Mladic as the legitimate leaders of a legitimate entity. In reality, as the September 13th meeting shows, the Holbrooke delegation does negotiate—albeit gingerly—with the two untouchables while at the same time quietly maneuvering against them. Holbrooke does not believe that any peace accord can hold unless Mladic, at least, is got rid of. "I don't see how we can implement a peace if he is the head of the Bosnian Serbs," Holbrooke told me. "The man is complicitous or worse in the worst war crimes since the end of the Second World War." So part of Holbrooke's job is to push Milosevic toward the idea of eventually selling out his partners in war crime.

"We have been pressing Milosevic that Mladic and Karadzic must both go," General Kerrick told me. "Milosevic says, correctly, that this would present him with a tremendous political problem. He swears that he detests these people, but he says, correctly again, that he is the elected President of Serbia, not of the Bosnian Serbs, and he cannot just remove them from power. He is proposing some sort of process that would give him political cover—maybe a quick election in which he could run candidates against these guys, and get them out that way."

This disjunction between appearance and reality, which underlies the Holbrooke negotiations, informs even the inviolable idea on which the entire concept of a Balkans peace is predicated: that Milosevic will respect the integrity of a postwar Bosnia-Herzegovina that would include a Serb republic. Milosevic, Kerrick says, has not given up his dream of a Greater Serbia. "But he is pragmatic enough to know that he cannot accomplish that now," Kerrick says. "He figures he can cut Mladic and Karadzic off now, make peace, and, ten years from now, take another look at the issue."

IN the days before the peace talks were to begin, State Department teams worked in harried haste to build both a conference and a nation. The magnitude of the job they faced was indicated by the teams' encompassing titles: Framework Peace Agreement, Separation of Forces, Constitution, Elections, Implementation Force, Economic Reconstruction, Refugees and Human Assistance, Congressional Consultation, Police, Press, United Nations Actions. Holbrooke was still shuttling about Europe, trying to nail down endless unfinished details, and also trying to defuse some bad news. On October 20th, the front page of the *Times* contained a story that quoted senior Western diplomats saying that they had evidence that paramilitary forces controlled by the notorious Serb brigand known as Arkan had recently massacred Muslim men and boys near the northwestern Bosnian city of Banja Luka. It was not helpful that the Serb soldiers who were believed to have committed these atrocities were also thought to be more or less under the control of President Milosevic. Holbrooke flew to Zagreb to meet with John Shattuck, the Assistant Secretary of State who had investigated the reports of the massacre. "The reports were accurate," Holbrooke said several days later. "A terrible crime had taken place as the sides prepared for peace." He then flew to Belgrade, and confronted Milosevic. The encounter did not go well. "I told him that this jeopardized the chances for peace, that it was widely believed he had the power to stop this and had not done so," Holbrooke said. "His answer was a combination of things: that he didn't control Arkan, that the reports were not true, and that the Croats were doing the same sort of thing anyway. I was deeply frustrated."

There was a lot of doubt in the air. Secretary of State Christopher and Secretary of Defense William J. Perry, appearing before a congressional committee, confronted deeply skeptical questioning about the prospective role of the American military in enforcing a Bosnian peace. One of the questions was whether American officers heading the NATO Implementation Force would be obliged to arrest Ratko Mladic for murder when he showed up to negotiate the terms of his army's disengagement. Perry said no; Christopher said probably yes. Back at the State Department, lawyers were trying to figure out which Secretary was right.

About two weeks before the talks were scheduled to begin, Ted Koppel invited Holbrooke onto "Nightline" to question him about the perils facing the American soldiers who would be sent to Bosnia. On the air, Koppel

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pressed politely and Holbrooke dodged easily. But, once the show was over, Koppel, sitting in the greenroom of the ABC offices in downtown Washington, interrogated Holbrooke in a more aggressive fashion. After reminding Holbrooke of the lessons of Southeast Asia, Koppel said he was convinced that the American plan amounted to an ill-considered exercise in escalation and would lead to a new Vietnam. What, he demanded, would stop Bosnian Serb guerrilla units from taking potshots at the American soldiers as an encouragement to go home? "This is not Vietnam," Holbrooke insisted. Koppel disagreed.

"Look," Holbrooke finally said. "This is different. The Vietcong were dedicated ideologues, committed to a long-term struggle. These guys aren't ideologues; they're just murderous assholes."

Koppel gave Holbrooke a dry, curious look. "Oh, thank you," he said. "That's very reassuring. I'll feel much better sending my son or daughter over there knowing that the Serbs are just murderous assholes."

Among those who have doubts about what Richard Holbrooke and the United States are driving toward in the Balkans is Richard Holbrooke himself. Freshly back from his sixth trip to the Balkans since August, he telephoned me one morning last week. As always, he was in a big hurry. He ate breakfast while he talked, and I could hear him chewing as he worried out loud about the repercussions of what he was doing and about how he would be judged for them. "My worst nightmare is a decent interval and then *Anschluss*," Holbrooke said. "You remember the phrase 'a decent interval'? Kissinger is alleged to have said, 'All we need is a decent interval' when someone asked him if he was worried about North Vietnam taking over South Vietnam once the United States pulled out. That's what I worry about now—a decent interval and then *Anschluss*. What's to keep the Bosnian Serbs from stopping the war now and saying later, 'Hey, we've just decided we don't want to be part of Bosnia anymore'—and then merging with Serbia after all? Who is going to stop that?"

It was an excellent question, but not one that Holbrooke could answer, and, anyway, he didn't have the time. ♦

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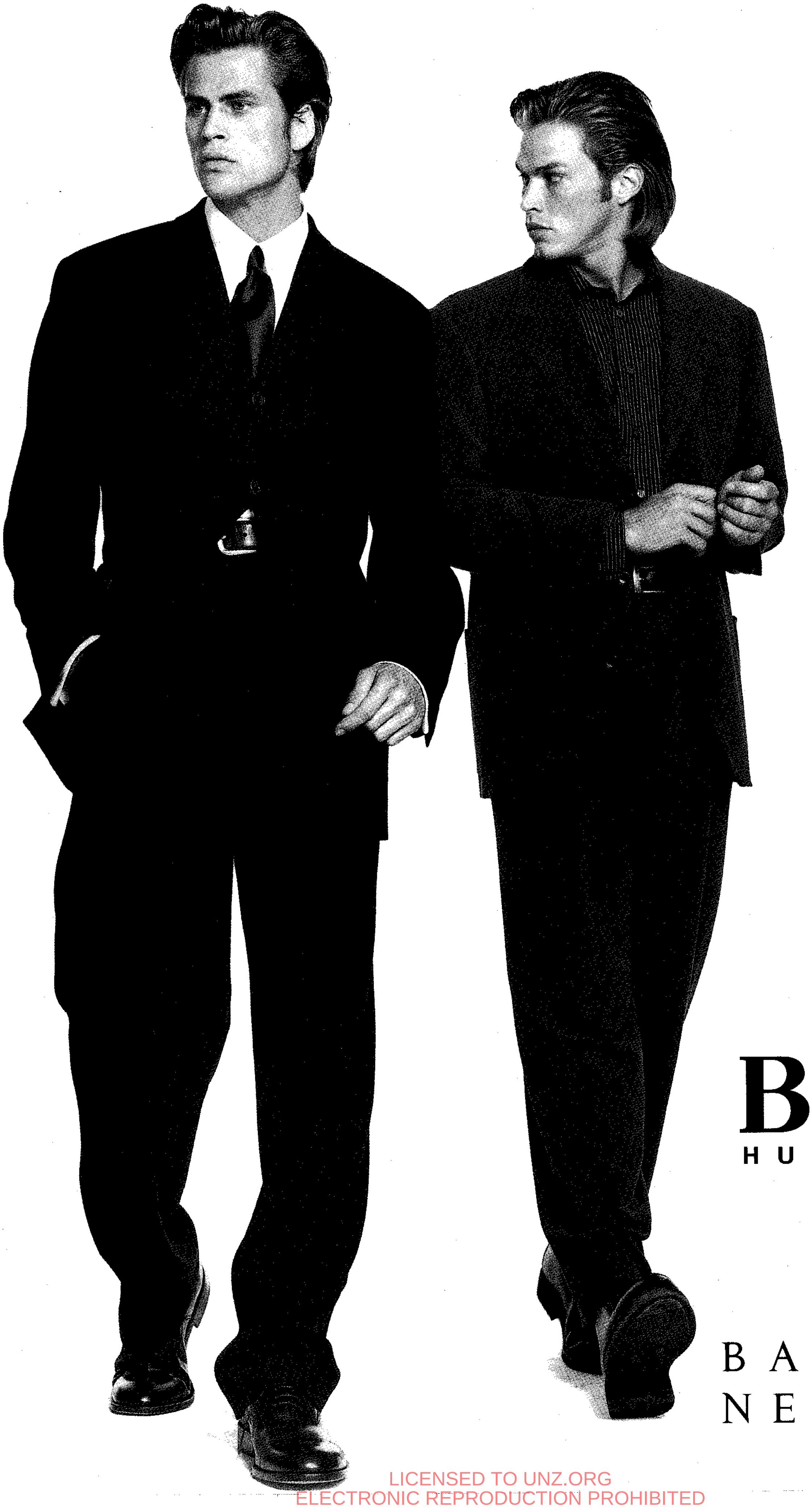

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Few cultural critics have a vision as eclectic and intriguing as Stanley Crouch's. Fewer still actually fight to prove their points.

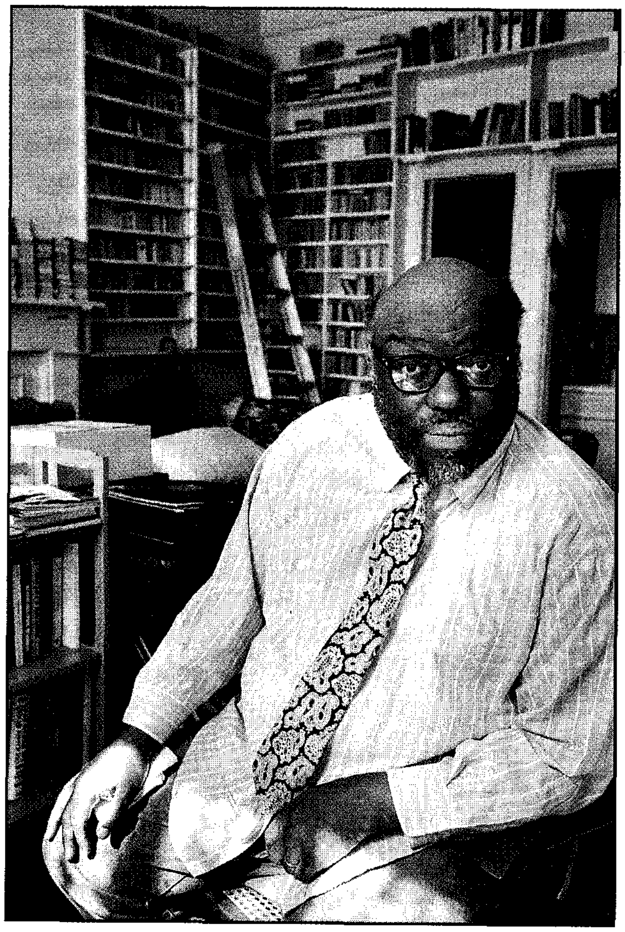
BY ROBERT S. BOYNTON

On a balmy New York evening, Stanley Crouch navigates his stocky figure down the Village Vanguard's long, steep stairway. It is his third visit to the club that week, and the opening set of the Wessell Anderson–Wycliffe Gordon quintet, whose members have all passed through Wynton Marsalis's ensemble, is just getting under way. After being warmly greeted by Lorraine Gordon, the Vanguard's owner, Crouch gestures toward the members of the band, who all smile and wave back.

Launching into their first tune, the band plays in the clean, modern style that has inspired a generation of young musicians to join Marsalis's revolution. The club is packed with men and women of every age, ethnic group, and background—a diversity that Crouch notes with satisfaction as he lights up an enormous cigar and takes a few long, appreciative puffs.

During a break, the band files past Crouch's table, exchanging pleasantries and asking how they sound. Crouch pulls the drummer, Greg Hutchinson, aside to chat about the rhythms that he has been experimenting with. Just then, Marsalis himself glides in—"stopping by to check up on the guys," he says, with an older brother's pride. After he and Crouch have discussed some business concerning the Jazz at Lincoln Center program, which the two men helped found in 1991, Crouch heads over to Bradley's to hear the alto saxophonist Gary Bartz, "one of the very best who has ever picked up the instrument," according to the liner notes Crouch wrote for Bartz's new album.

At Bradley's, Crouch is the center of attention. "Yo, Stanley! How's the weight?" someone shouts. Crouch pats his ample belly. "My wife has me on a diet," he says. "It'll be gone soon." The pianist John Hicks locks him in a bear hug; musicians paw him as he sidles past the bar; the actor Michael Moriarty, of "Law & Order" fame, invites him over for a drink. Moriarty and Crouch met recently at the National Board of Review awards, where Crouch accepted the Best Director prize for Quentin Tarantino; the filmmaker had asked Crouch to take his place at the ceremony because he so admired Crouch's essay on "Pulp Fiction." ("A high point in a low age," Crouch wrote in the Los Angeles *Times*.)



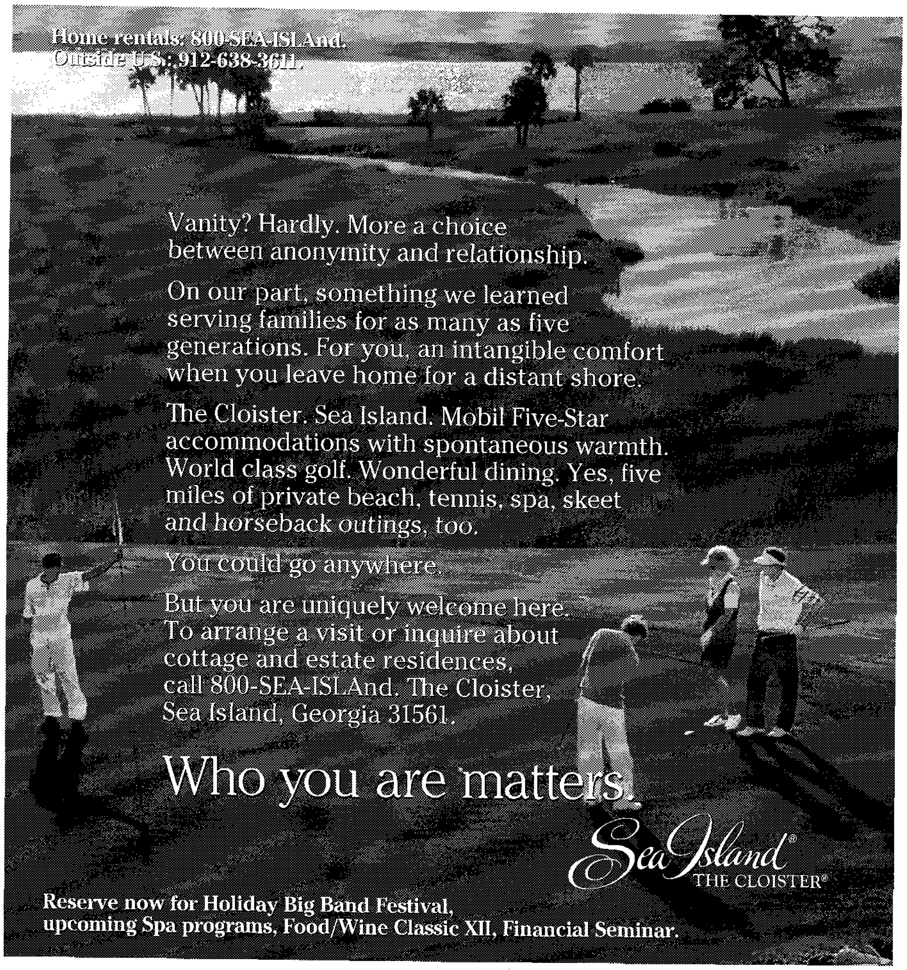
Crouch position: "When I see black people going through this shit today about the importance of being African-Americans, I know they're still lost." Photograph by Jill Krementz.

"I *love* this guy," Moriarty says. "Whenever I act, it's for Stanley. He's one of the few people who understand what I'm trying to do." Crouch clearly enjoys the attention. Grinning serenely, like an ebony Buddha, he lights a cigarette and blows the smoke nonchalantly past his thick tortoiseshell glasses; it drifts back over his enormous bald pate. "This guy is so cool," Moriarty goes on. "Just look at the way he smokes."

Dropping his shoulders in a mock gangster pose, Moriarty sneers, takes a theatrically long pull on his cigarette, and exhales derisively in a dead-on imitation.

Not to be outdone, Crouch narrows his eyes and sucks hard on the cigarette, affecting an even more sinister air. "Check *this* out, Michael," he growls. "This here is the *real* deal."

Stanley Crouch hardly lacks for venues these days to convey what he variously calls "the real deal" or "what's *actually* going down" or "how it *really* is." In his *Daily News* column, in frequent appearances on "Charlie Rose" and on National Public Radio, in essays for the Los Angeles *Times*, *Time*, and *The New Republic* (where he is a contributing editor), Crouch, who is forty-nine, has fashioned a place for himself as one of America's most outspoken and controversial critics. After thirty years as actor, poet, playwright, jazz drummer, professor, and essayist, Crouch is a rare figure in a narrowly specialized intellectual world: he's an independent thinker, unconstrained by affiliation with any camp, creed, or organization. Which isn't to say he's without connections. His marriage to Gloria Nixon, held last New Year's Eve in the political columnist Jack Newfield's town house, was presided over by Judge Milton Mollen. He's had dinners with Vice-President Al Gore; and New York's Representative Charles Schumer counts him as an informal adviser. "Stanley pokes holes in the conventional wisdom of the left and right," Schumer says. "His views are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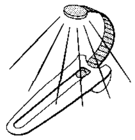

neither black nor white—they're just smart."

Crouch is a master of the intellectual sound bite. The Million Man March, he says, "will be remembered as the 'Waterworld' of Afro-American politics: a lot of money and publicity, but it didn't work." Gangsta rap is " 'Birth of a Nation' with a backbeat"; its performers are "the biggest Uncle Toms of the twentieth century." Black nationalism is "a nappy-headed version of 'Workers of the World, Unite!' " and Afrocentrism another "simpleminded hustle." He calls the black feminist critic Bell Hooks "a terrier with attitude," Malcolm X "the Elvis Presley of race politics," and the novelist and Nobel laureate Toni Morrison "as American as P. T. Barnum" and a writer with "no serious artistic vision or real artistic integrity." He is a famously dexterous raconteur, whose epic bouts of "holding forth" raise free association to an art form; his best speeches are hip versions of the learned diatribes delivered by Saul Bellow's fictional alter egos. In the Crouchian view of the world, everything is somehow related to everything else. He translates E. M. Forster's modest dictum into rugged Americanese: *always* connect. A self-appointed "hanging judge" ("Notes of a Hanging Judge" is the title of his first essay collection, published five years ago), Crouch is—depending on your point of view—either a tough-minded independent critic or a neoconservative hit man who targets African-American arts and letters.

Among Crouch's most effective rhetorical tools is his "flip test," which he uses to unmask what he sees as the double standard of our racially neurotic society. "What if Woody Allen were accused of murdering Mia Farrow and a friend, and the cop who searched Allen's apartment turned out to be a rabid anti-Semite who had said he'd plant evidence on a New York Jew if he had half a chance?" Crouch asks a few days after the Simpson verdict. "At trial, the prosecution portrays the cop—its star witness—as Captain Whitebread, but Allen's lawyer learns of his attitude toward Jews and uses it. Would he be accused of waving the bloody shirt of anti-Semitism? I'm *sorry*, but the case would go down! And when the nine Jews on the jury voted to acquit, it wouldn't be because they were crazy, it would be because the prosecution embraced a scumbag and got caught!" Another favorite riff: "Black kids who dress like gangsters complain that they get bad service at restaurants and stores. They say, 'Hey, we aren't thugs, we just *dress* that way.' Well, let's flip it over. Let's say a white guy comes into a store wearing a K.K.K. outfit, and everybody is horrified. And he says, 'I'm not *really* a Klansman, I just like the *look*.' Now, with ninety-nine per cent of those black kids it *is* only style, but we just don't have time to go around interviewing them: 'Excuse me, young man, are you *actually* carrying a 9-mm. pistol or is your outfit just a cultural signifier?' "

Crouch's constitutional contrarianism has led some people to charge that his only consistent aim is to draw attention to himself. Others are skeptical of his claim to toe no ideological line. They point out that his targets are disproportionately left and liberal, black and female; and they cite some of the positions he has gravitated to—his tough "law and order" stance, his impatience with the "excesses" of the black-nationalist, feminist, and gay-rights movements. Bell Hooks says, "Stanley's attacks go so far over the top they have a kind of RuPaul drag-queen quality. He apes a peculiar hybrid of jungle-bunny masculinity and new-right Fascism. He has seen that it pays off when you kiss the ass of white supremacy." Cornel West is also skeptical about Crouch's public persona. "I admire the brother's candor, but his abrasive style is so alienating that it tends to reinforce the polarization," he says. "The low points, like the vicious attack on Toni Morrison, gain more attention. His brilliant jazz criticism is overshadowed." Some of his critics are too incensed even to talk. "He's a backwards, asinine person!" Amiri Baraka sputters, before slamming down the phone.

The most bitter denunciations, however, come from people who were once his close supporters; Crouch has more ex-friends than most people have friends. "He turns all his intellectual attacks into personal vendettas—he has trouble finishing projects and takes out his frustration on other artists," says the writer Quincy Troupe, with whom Crouch was friends for twenty-five years—until Crouch, in *The New Republic*, savaged a book Troupe had written with Miles Davis. The saxophonist David Murray, once Crouch's best friend, is still reeling from their break a decade ago. "He thrives on upsetting people," Murray says. "It makes me sad, but nobody should change as much as he has."

Crouch's willingness to challenge opponents anywhere and at any time can be off-putting even to admirers. "He once threatened to throw me out of a window," Robert Christgau, a senior editor at the *Village Voice*, says. "But he didn't. For all his shit, Stanley is one of the most charming people I've ever met." There have been plenty of times, however, when Crouch's belligerence has overwhelmed his charm. Stories of his brawls are legendary; there seem to be few people in the jazz world with whom he *hasn't* exchanged blows. "I have a kind of Mailer-esque reaction to the way some people view writers," Crouch says. "I want them to know that just because I write doesn't mean that I can't also fight." But Crouch's pugilistic style has other sources as well. He is an old-fashioned moral absolutist: to his mind, positions he disagrees with

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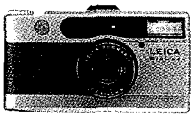

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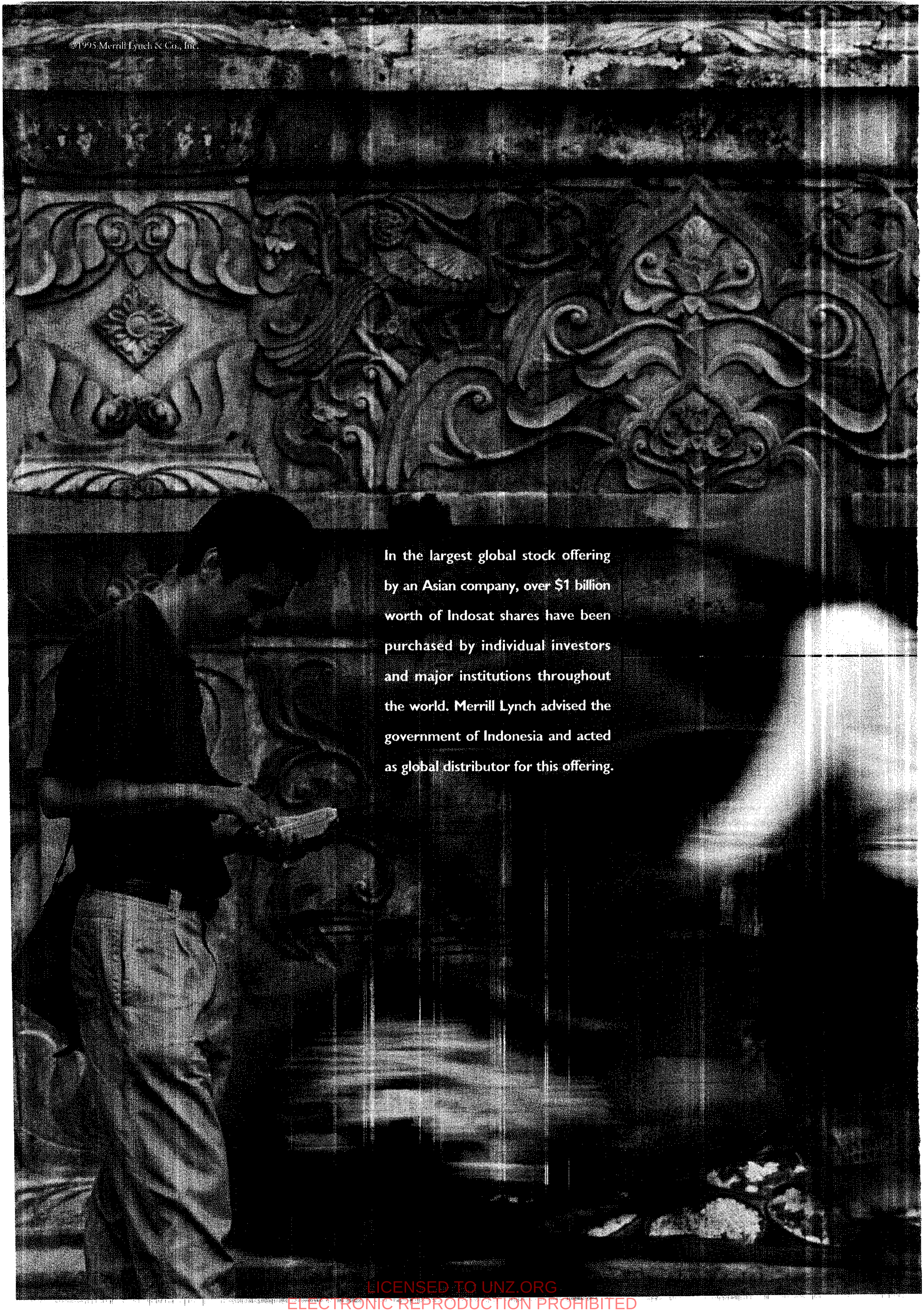

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aren't merely wrong—they're *bad*. "I know it sounds extreme," the writer Sally Helgesen, a former girlfriend of his, says, "but Stanley really does believe that rap and rock and roll are the Devil."

Enthusiastic, combative, and never averse to attention, Crouch has a virtually insatiable appetite for controversy; he is happy only in the heat of a battle (he calls his office "the war room") or when he's pressing a favorite cause—something he often does by phone. The writer and poet Steve Cannon has been on the other end of the line a good many times. "Once, Stanley woke me up at six-thirty on a Saturday morning and said, 'Hey, man, what do you think about Leon Forrest's new novel, "Divine Days"? After "Invisible Man," this is the one to beat. Have you checked it out yet, brother?' " The eleven-hundred-page novel had been out for a week.

PESCE PASTA, a modest Italian restaurant on Bleecker Street, is currently Crouch's favorite lunch spot. Jugs of olive oil and bottles of red wine wrapped in wicker line its brick walls, and wooden tables creak convincingly in faux-peasant atmosphere. It has been four days since a water main burst on Crouch's tree-lined West Village block, and he has eaten his last three meals here. After practically inhaling two baskets of bread and a large bowl of lobster fra diavolo, he tucks into a steaming plate of fresh pasta, heaped high with seafood and tomatoes.

Crouch has been busy of late. He has just completed an essay for a new edition of Bellow's "Mr. Sammler's Planet" and an introduction to a Modern Library edition of Faulkner's "Go Down, Moses." A second batch of his own essays, "The All-American Skin Game, or, the Decoy of Race," will be published by Pantheon next month, and he is editing two anthologies—one about jazz, the other devoted to the art of the literary hatchet job, which he plans to entitle "Scalps." He is trying to finish a novel, "First Snow in Kokomo," and a Charlie Parker biography, which has been in the works for well over a decade. In his spare time, he is writing a treatment for a television documentary on the history of jazz.

"The central thing I'm trying to overcome in everything I am writing is the reductive idea that Negro culture is stuck out on some distant sidetrack in a railroad yard," he tells me over lunch. "It's as if you come in the station and ask, 'Excuse me, where is the Negro car?,' and someone points into the distance and says, 'It's *way* over there, off to the side: the run-down one with three squeaky wheels and paint peeling off—that's the Negro car.' This is the way black achievement is often viewed in America." Attempting to reinstate a more robust notion of African-American identity in the culture, Crouch considers himself a member of a "lost generation," which is only now recovering from having renounced the humanistic vision of the civil-rights movement in favor of the xenophobia and marginalization that followed. "When I see black people going through this shit today about the importance of being *African*-Americans, I know they're *still* lost," Crouch says, adding a prodigious amount of sugar to his coffee. "They're constantly talking about what some mysterious 'they' are trying to do to some unified 'us.' In the past twenty-five years, this way of thinking has had a disastrous effect, spawning a cult of victimization in which one group after another has pursued a tragic past so that each can look Negroes in the eye and say, 'It happened to me, too.' First it was women, then homosexuals, and now we have the so-called angry white men."

"Our priorities have gotten totally turned around," he says later. "The test used to be 'Can you, as a minority group, live up to these bourgeois standards?' This was something Jewish immigrants had down. They knew, as a minority group in a democratic situation, that *more* sophistication is demanded—not less—because in the end you'll never be able to bully your way to what you want. But *now* the test is 'Can you, faceless white America, put up with me acting obnoxious and *not* get irritated? Because, if you do get irritated, then you're the racist pig I always knew you were.' Now, I tend to believe that people are getting pretty sick of that old con. Before the civil-rights movement was hijacked by radicals, a complicated process was under way in which the three-dimensional humanity of black Americans was beginning to be recognized by the country at large. The civil-rights movement said, 'If we can just melt down this huge iceberg of stereotypes,

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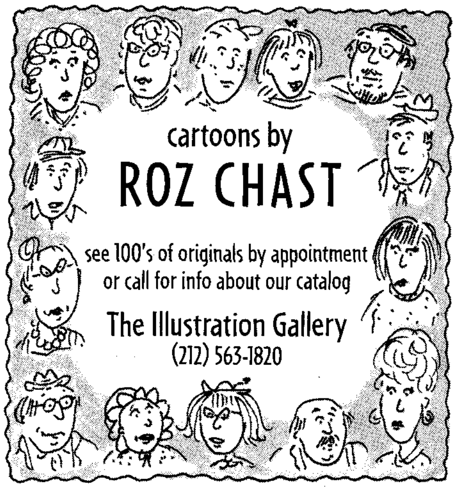

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we'll be able to recognize our parallel humanity and get on with the business of democratic life.' But then all the Jew- and honky-baiting started, and a tremendous opportunity was squandered. The problem with nationalists today is that they've essentially thrown their birthright out the window and are letting people like Newt Gingrich define 'American civilization,' which is a term he uses all the time. Well, I'm not going to just sit here and let that happen."

The intellectual tradition that Crouch aligns himself with is anchored in the works of Ralph Ellison and Albert Murray. Its most powerful expressions are Ellison's "Invisible Man" and his essays in "Shadow and Act" and "Going to the Territory," and Murray's "The Omni-Americans." Fleshing out James Baldwin's observation that "the story of the Negro in America is the story of America," these writers argue that African-Americans are the moral center of the country's hybrid culture; Ellison, indeed, went as far as to assert—in his 1970 essay "What America Would Be Like Without Blacks"—that America "could not survive being deprived of their presence."

Albert Murray, a gifted essayist whose attachment to literary culture is so vivid that he refers to the thousands of books lining his Harlem apartment as "colleagues," propounds a vision of the black intellectual's vocation that informs Crouch's almost messianic zeal. "We are trying to deal with the same existential problem Eliot confronted in 'The Waste Land,'" Murray says, of his and Crouch's larger cultural project. "When the hero comes to the barren land, Eliot's assumption is that long ago there was a golden age when the king was well and the land was healthy. Eliot tells us that the central dilemma of the modern age is that nobody is capable of truly heroic action. Today, America's only possible hope is that the *Negroes* might save us, which is what we're all trying to do. We've got Louis, Duke, Count, and Ralph, and now we're trying to do it with Wynton and Stanley. That's all we are—just a bunch of Negroes *trying* to save America."

SERVING time in a San Francisco jail for drug possession, James Crouch learned of his son Stanley's birth when his wife held the newborn infant to the phone and smacked him so that his father could hear his screams. Or so family lore

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has it. Stanley describes the elder Crouch as a heroin addict and a hustler, who had migrated from East Texas to California in the thirties. Father and son didn't meet until Stanley was about twelve, and over the next decade they saw each other only occasionally. Today, after thirty years of silence, Crouch is considering hiring a private detective to find out what has become of his father.

Emma Bea Crouch, Stanley's mother, supported the family by cleaning houses in Los Angeles six days a week. She doted on her children—Stanley had an older sister, who is now an accountant in Houston, and a younger brother, who died of complications from gunshot wounds in 1980—and she taught Stanley to read before he started school. In the evenings, she made them watch movies of "Richard III" and "Macbeth" and the like on television. "My mother was Little Miss Perfect Lower Class," Crouch says. "She was an aristocrat in that strange American way that has nothing to do with money."

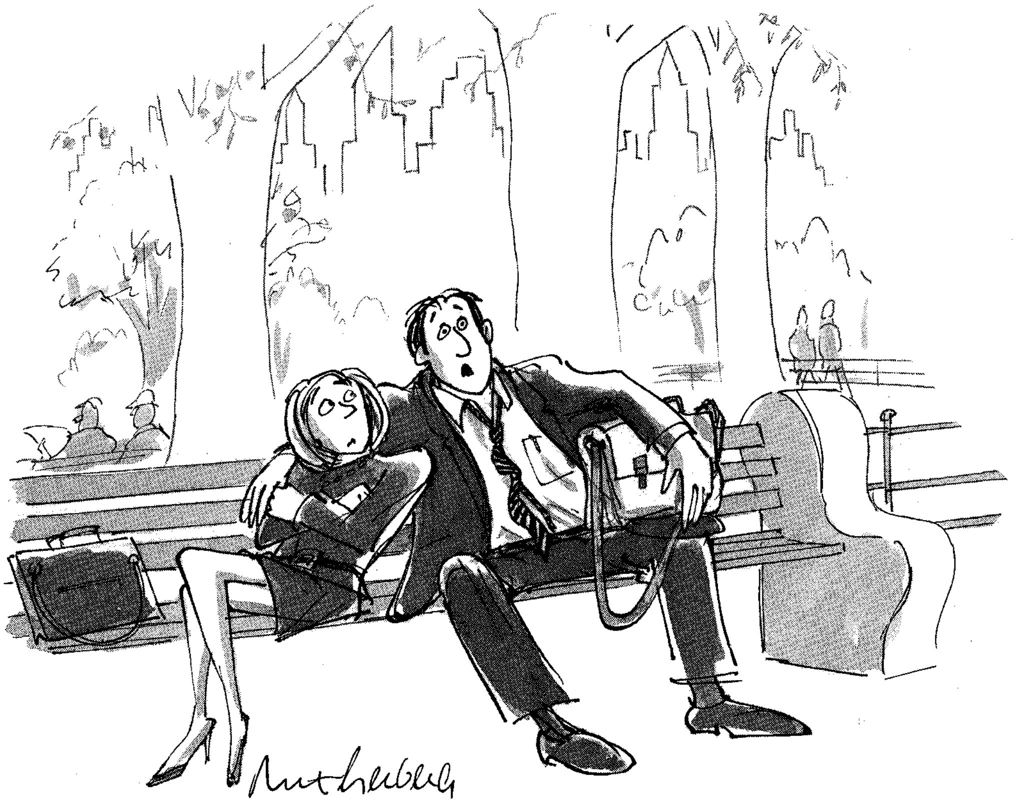
When he was a child, asthma kept him home so much that neighbors weren't sure whether the family had two children or three. He spent much of that time reading. According to childhood friends, by eleventh grade he had devoured the complete works of Hemingway, Twain, and Fitzgerald. While he was in high school, he also started a jazz club and, according to one childhood friend, the poet Eric Priestley, he "knew more about jazz than anyone else in the community." Priestley (though not Crouch) recalls, "His mother didn't want us getting caught smoking on the street, so we'd get high and listen to music at his house. The room was real dark, and we'd smoke and listen to Bird, Diz, Monk, Miles, Rollins, Eric Dolphy."

After graduating from high school, in 1963, Crouch attended two junior colleges on and off for three years without receiving a degree from either. During that time, he became interested in poetry and drama, and was particularly taken by the work of LeRoi Jones (later Amiri Baraka), who wrote both. Crouch's exposure to the civil-rights movement came through a series of jobs raising money for SNCC. When riots swept through Watts, in August of 1965, Crouch was startled by the emotions that were unleashed. He sensed that a tremendous change of consciousness was taking place in the black community—that some younger people were increasingly impatient with the nonviolent civil-rights movement, and were increasingly angry at whites. "That was after reports came out of the Congo about these nuns who had been raped, and I remember sitting with some guys and hearing one say, 'Good, they should have killed the bitches,' " he says. "This was something new."

In the aftermath of the riots, a number of programs sprang up in Watts to help the area recover from the devastation. The screenwriter and novelist Budd Schulberg started the Watts Writers Workshop, whose seminars and readings launched the careers of authors like Quincy Troupe and the poet Ojenke. Many of its members lived in a commune that they named the House of Respect. The readings were sometimes held at the nearby Watts Happening Coffee House. Although Crouch was not a formal member of the workshop, he often participated in these readings. From 1965 to 1967, he was a member of Studio Watts, a local repertory theatre that performed plays like Jean Genet's "The Blacks" as well as works written by Crouch and other members of the group. The studio was run by Jayne Cortez, a poet, who had recently broken up with the saxophonist Ornette Coleman; soon after Crouch joined the group, he and Cortez became involved with each other, though neither will discuss this side of their relationship. Cortez's devotion to the theatre had a profound effect on the twenty-year-old Crouch: "I'd never met anyone with that kind of aesthetic commitment, who'd drawn a line in the dirt and said, 'I am an artist.' "

Even while Crouch was exploring the theatre, his reputation as a poet was growing. The poet Garrett Hongo, who later studied with him, remembers hearing him read. "He had these chantlike lines that resembled Whitman, but they were in a black street vernacular that was eloquent and pissed off," Hongo says. "He'd run this rap, with quotations from Shakespeare and Melville, riff on Langston Hughes and Cecil Taylor, and then relate it all to that day's news."

Crouch's poetry focussed not only on jazz but also on the nationalist themes that were the order of the day: in one poem he calls the police "blue-bellied



"No, I like my job. I like my apartment. I like my friends. I like our relationship. I'm just not sure I like what it all adds up to."

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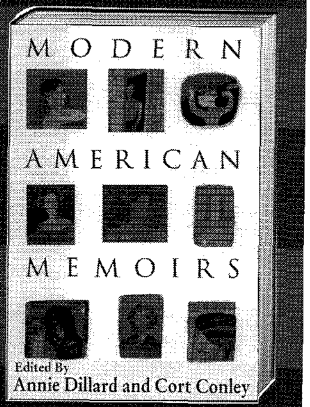

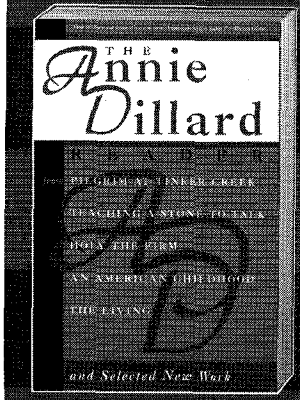

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snakes." His 1972 collection of poems, "Ain't No Ambulances for No Nigguhs Tonight," takes its title from the response that a black person purportedly received during the riots after calling for help. In the poem "Too Late Blues," though, Crouch's skepticism toward the nationalist impulse is already evident:

> when the beasts with the badges arrived . . .
>
> 40 million slabs were laid out
>
> Fashion-plate nationalists were too busy
> making money selling clothes
> to notice.
> They died in their bright African colors,
> Swahili curses dripping from their mouths
>
> Many revolutionaries
> got theirs in the ass
> as they bucked atop
> another bourgeois bitch:
> Preparing her for the revolution.

By 1967, Crouch was organizing "poetry and jazz afternoons" at Watts Happening. One day he heard Budd Schulberg talking to a workshop member who had just given a particularly poor poetry reading. Crouch recalls, "One line was so awful I'll *never* forget it: 'A ship, a chain, a distant land; a whip, some pain, a white man's hand.' And Schulberg was politely telling this guy the small reasons the piece didn't work, when the problem was that it was *completely* awful. Schulberg was nervous, because *he* knew that *I* knew that this was some real garbage. That day was one of the pivotal moments of my life, because I saw how even a guy with the best intentions could be incredibly paternalistic and encourage third-rate work."

As universities began responding to the racial unrest of the sixties, more positions opened up for black teachers. In 1968, Crouch became the poet-in-residence at Pitzer College, in Claremont, California, and soon he was appointed the first full-time faculty member of the Claremont Colleges Black Studies Center. Sensing that the program was an uncertain base, Crouch soon sought a position in the English Department of Pomona College, another of the Claremont Colleges. Only twenty-two and lacking even a college diploma, he relied on his wits in lobbying for the job. "There was one night of grand politicking, when I visited four members of the department to display my wares," he recalls. "One was a Joyce scholar, so we talked about Joyce; another loved Melville, so we talked about him. I always knew something about the subject at hand that they hadn't ever heard before. So I'd just let

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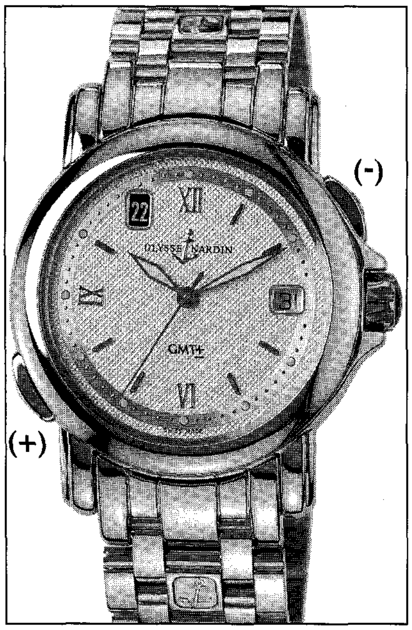

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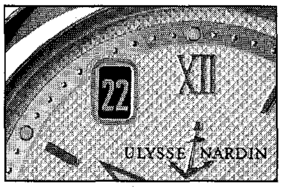

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loose with my special take, and *that* was the sword that cut the dragon's throat."

Crouch gave classes in theatre and literature, and was evidently an extraordinary teacher. "Stanley lectured the way Tina Turner sang," Hongo says. "It was rough, sexy, and raw. He said American literature was the story of the hunt: it was about exploitation, conquering something, putting a gun to its head and blowing it off. 'Moby Dick' was a gang vendetta on the natural world." At lily-white Claremont, Crouch's presence offered something for everybody. "A big black guy who wore a dashiki and lectured on Melville?" the engineering mogul Cedric Johnson, who was a student at the time, says. "Man, it played like a pop tune to us."

Crouch had an especially strong effect on female students, one of whom, Marianne Williamson, would become famous as a New Age guru. "He was my professor, my friend, and my escort from childhood into adulthood," she says. "You know how with some people you say, 'Don't lecture me'? With Stanley you want to say, '*Please* lecture me.' "

The movie producer Lynda Obst, whose credits include "Sleepless in Seattle," also studied with Crouch. He is now her son's godfather; at Pomona, he was both her teacher and her lover. "Stanley cultivated this gangster look with a little cigarette hanging from the corner of his mouth," she says. "He had a real tough Panther walk—a cross between Ike Turner and Bobby Seale—that crackled with energy, all coming from his head. It was very physical and intellectual, which, of course, also made it very sexual."

And his presence in the classroom was equally galvanizing. "The first day of class, I sat in the front row because I had broken my leg in a motorcycle accident coming back from a 'be-in.' He was the most charismatic speaker I had ever seen," Obst recalls. "The class was one-third black and two-thirds white, and all the white students were gazing up, slack-jawed, writing down every word. At one point, Stanley said something outrageous, like 'There's no such thing as a white musician,' and I looked around the room and saw that these kids were seriously writing it down. I thought, What the hell does *that* mean? So I raised my hand and said, 'Well, what about the Beatles?' At that, he burst out laughing and said, 'Oho! Little Miss Beatlemania!'—and he called me that for years. From then on, we had these huge ideological battles over breakfast each morning: Miss Beatlemania and the leader of the black-power movement. I'm from a classic Jewish intellectual family in Westchester, and he was fascinated by that. We were perfect: Stanley, the student of Bellow and Roth, had never actually met a creature from Bellow- or Rothland, while I had never met anybody who *wasn't*."

At Pomona, Crouch lived with students in a rambling off-campus house. "Since it was the sixties, we didn't see the need for any furniture," John Payton, now a Washington lawyer, says. "Stanley had about a billion books stacked against the walls, thousands of albums, a stereo, and an enormous drum set, which was right in the center of the room. I'd walk in at 2 A.M. and he'd be sitting there alone, playing his heart out." Crouch had taken up the drums in 1966, teaching himself the "free style" that was becoming popular. "The problem was that I couldn't really play," Crouch says. "Since I was doing this avant-garde stuff, I didn't have to be all that good, but I was a real knucklehead. If I hadn't been so arrogant and had just spent a couple of years on rudiments, I'd have taken it *over*, man—no doubt about it. I was in a group for a while, but when I realized that nobody would ever hire me I started my own band." He called it Black Music Infinity.

Black Music Infinity rehearsed in Crouch's living room. With David Murray on tenor, Arthur Blythe on alto, James Newton on flute, Mark Dresser on bass, and Bobby Bradford on trumpet, it was a stylistically diverse mixture of musicians, all of whom went on to distinguished careers. During this time, Bradford and Crouch had long conversations about the history of jazz—and about Louis Armstrong in particular. Twenty years later, when Crouch and Marsalis teamed up to push the cause of traditional jazz, it became clear just how important these conversations with Bradford had been.

Besides playing in Crouch's band, Bradford composed and arranged music for several of the plays Crouch was writing and directing at Pomona. With a corps of devoted students at his disposal, Crouch used the theatre as a laboratory for aesthetic and philosophical experiments. By all accounts, his plays were ideologically compelling and technically accomplished—full of rotating stages and

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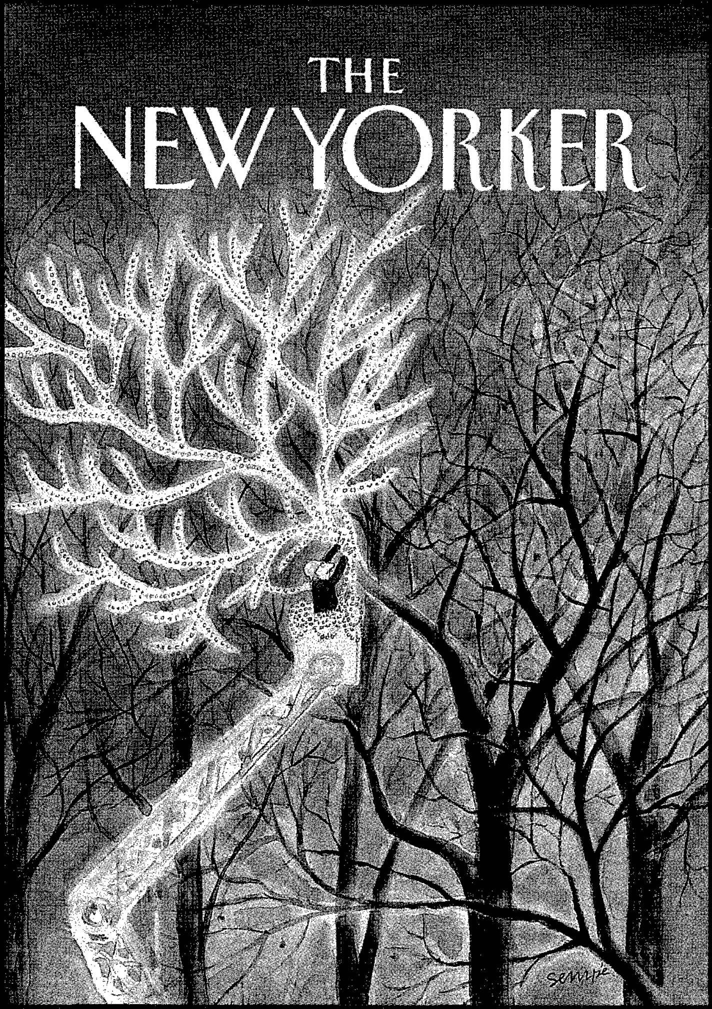

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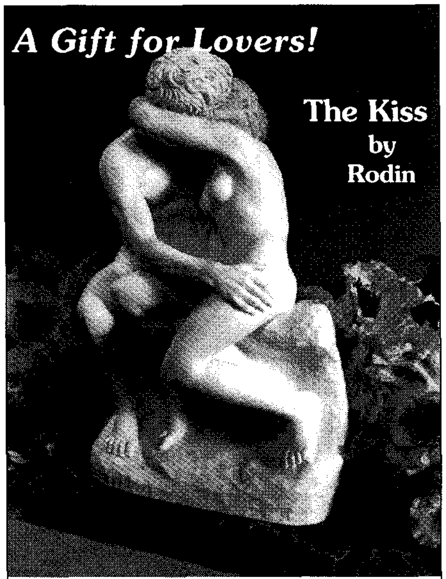

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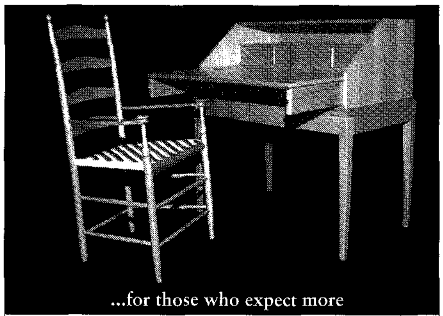

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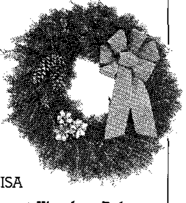

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innovative lighting. George C. Wolfe, the producer of the Joseph Papp Public Theatre, was a student, and those familiar with both men's work say that Crouch's influence on Wolfe is still apparent. Slavery and exploitation were among Crouch's favorite themes. He adapted Melville's "Benito Cereno," after rejecting Robert Lowell's version, which he felt was marred by the poet's liberal sentimentality. "In Stanley's version, the captain is brutally murdered by the slaves," David Flaten, the director of the production, recalls. "Everyone was shocked and horrified, because at the time this was everyone's worst nightmare. White liberals found it racist, and blacks were offended. Stanley always wanted to make the audience feel threatened."

By 1975, Crouch had been teaching at Claremont for seven years, and he was becoming restless. He was convinced that in order to make it—as a drummer, a poet, a playwright, or a critic—he had to leave. "Stanley always had a thing about New York," Lynda Obst says. "He had very complicated theories about how everything worked there long before he got there. He knew all about the relationships between musicians and record executives, between landlords and tenants, and, especially, between blacks and Jews. It was hilarious, because he'd sit there explaining it all to me, when *I* was the one who had grown up there."

JEWS, Crouch will tell you, have always held a special place in his life. His mother often took young Stanley along to her Jewish employers' homes. "I was struck by the fact that they discussed everything," he says. " 'Who do you think should be President? What about our foreign policy?' And I thought, Gee whiz—so *this* is how it goes over here. This isn't bad." He continues, "In America, most people who come from a certain background are trying to figure out how to be smart without being dull. If you're Jewish, that isn't a problem, because there's a place in Jewish culture for a guy to be smart, period." Given these sentiments, it's not surprising that Crouch's identification with Jews is sometimes on the list of his critics' grievances against him. Ishmael Reed captures this resentment in his satiric novel "Reckless Eyeballing," whose Paul Shoboater, the pompous, self-important columnist for the *Downtown Mandarin*, is clearly based on Crouch. "Instead of fighting the Jews, you ought

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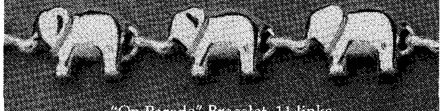

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to be like them," Shoboater lectures a friend.

Crouch arrived in New York in 1975, and he finally had an opportunity to test his theories about Jews. "We were always getting into these long discussions about Job," says Paul Pines, the owner of the Tin Palace, which was then one of the hottest jazz clubs in town. "Stanley's mind is essentially Talmudic. Intellectually, he found the world of Jews very attractive, and was trying to figure out his own relation to it." Crouch and David Murray moved into a loft above the Tin Palace, at Second Street and the Bowery, where they gave concerts and readings. Before long, Crouch started a Sunday-afternoon jazz series downstairs, and eventually booked the entire club. During this time, he developed a reputation for promoting avant-garde musicians like Butch Morris, Henry Threadgill, Arthur Blythe, and Oliver Lake. In the early morning, the club would be filled with musicians who had finished gigs elsewhere. A fourth set was added—starting at 2 A.M.—which often degenerated into a huge, unbridled jam session.

By then a fixture in the jazz world, Crouch approached Pines about opening a club of his own. ("He has all the sharpness of a black Sammy Glick," Pines wrote in his journal at the time.) Crouch sometimes helped out the bouncer at the Tin Palace, although not all his disputes were resolved physically. One night when a disagreement with a patron was about to turn violent, Crouch proposed an alternative. "I won't fight you, but I *will* race you," he said. After Crouch removed his shoes, the two bulky men took off into the night. "Stanley ran his heart out and won," Charles Turyn, a bartender, recalls. "Then, as punishment, he made the guy parade up and down the street yelling at the top of his lungs, 'Stanley Crouch just beat the *shit* out of me!' "

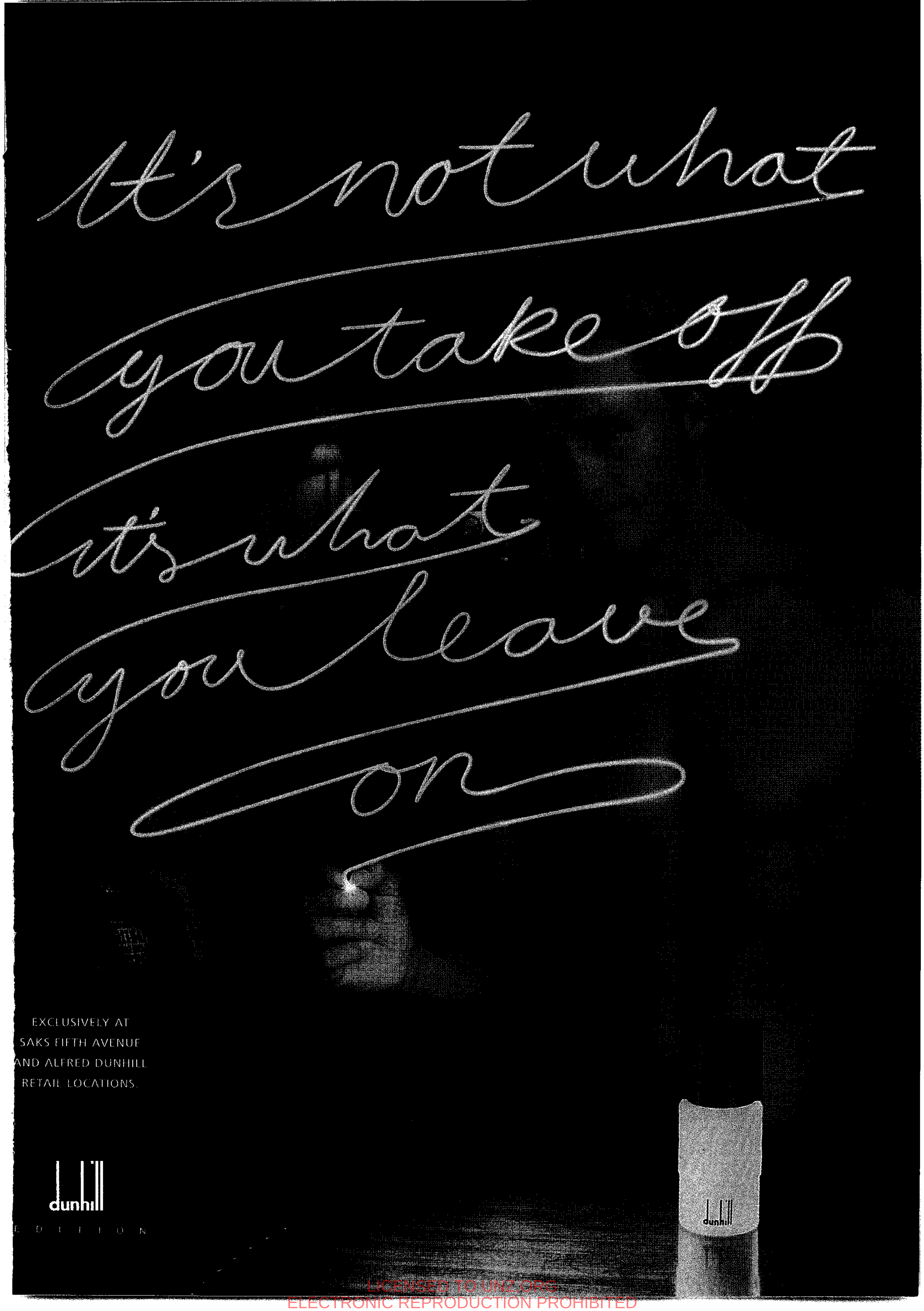
After a few years, the New York club scene began to wear thin. David Murray married the playwright Ntozake Shange, whom Crouch detested, and Crouch's first wife, Samerna (who had been a student at Pomona), came to New York and gave birth to their daughter, Dawneen. Soon Crouch and Samerna split up, and the mother and daughter returned to California. With money in short supply, Crouch was evicted from his loft, and for a time he slept on friends' couches. His taste for bohemia was ebbing; life in New York, he decided, could be as provincial as life in academia. "The goal in the East Village was to never become successful or have an impact on anyone other than those in your little world," he says. "I was tired of most of those people and their ideas about art."

Bohemia wasn't all that Crouch was rejecting in the late seventies. As his friendships with Ellison and Albert Murray grew, his always ambivalent relationship with black nationalism was strained to the breaking point. "Meeting Albert Murray was pivotal for me," he says. "I saw how important it is to free yourself from ideology. When you look at things solely in terms of race or class, you miss what is really going on. American intellectuals have difficulty understanding social complexity. They prefer savage purity and are blinded by their contempt for middle-class achievement." Soon he found his reviews for the *Liberator* and *Black World* being rejected as "too Western." "In the first place, the nigger just plain can't write" is how Crouch began a review of a collection by the celebrated Black Arts poet Haki R. Madhubuti.

In a *Village Voice* exchange with Amiri Baraka (whom he addressed as Papa Doc Baraka) in 1979, Crouch publicly severed his ties to the movement by accusing the man who had been its leading spokesman of espousing "Dick and Jane black nationalism." ("See white man be devil, devil, devil; See black man be beautiful, beautiful, beautiful.") He wrote, "LeRoi Jones is one of the greatest disappointments of this era and one of the most intellectually irresponsible men to have ever addressed a people tragically in need of well-researched and articulated information." In response, Baraka denounced "Comprador" Stanley as an "*agent of a foreign power which oppresses 'his own' nation.*"

Ironically, the left-liberal *Village Voice*, where Crouch was made a staff writer in 1980, was the locus for his political transformation. After years of writing primarily about jazz, he broadened his scope to include social and political issues. At a paper then better known for preaching racial diversity than for practicing it, Crouch's presence was felt.

"Stanley was always hanging around the office I shared with Richard Goldstein," Karen Durbin, now the *Voice's* editor in chief, says. "Here we were, a women's liberationist and a gay liberationist, both with lefty politics, and Stanley was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just magnetized. He'd pop in and say, 'So what do you think about this? Do you *really* believe that? Come on, let's fight!' Once, Richard told him that his fascination with homosexuality was a sign of latent sexual confusion. When Stanley heard that, he just broke out into this broad, amazed grin."

The *Voice* editor Robert Christgau says, "Stanley is a superb critic, and writes better about the drums than anybody. But sometimes he just faked it. He'd hand in a shitty review and I'd mark it up and he'd rewrite it in forty-five minutes, which is probably longer than he'd spent in the first place." Doug Simmons, now the *Voice's* managing editor, also edited Crouch. "His most endearing moment was when he gave me an awful piece—which was unusual—and I told him it sucked," Simmons says. "He started to get angry and said, 'What do you mean, it sucks?' And I said, 'Look, it's just no good and we won't print it.' He thought for a minute and said, 'You know, you're right, it does suck.' And he rewrote it. He was just happy to have someone engage him."

On many occasions, however, Crouch was not nearly so yielding. A fistfight with a black fellow-writer, Harry Allen, for which Crouch was fired, was preceded by a number of violent clashes with other staff members. "Stanley would sometimes just glare at you in a menacing way, as if he were calling you out," one writer says. "It was a powerful ploy, because you couldn't say anything without looking like a wimp." Crouch's dismissal, in 1988, left the *Voice* staff divided: some thought he had been given far too many chances by the weekly's guilty liberal managers; others thought he was being unfairly punished because of his race. "Fights with Stanley often consisted of him simply getting in your face," Christgau says. "He's a big guy, he talks loud—and he's black. Although the first two things bothered people, I always thought the third bothered them, too." Others disagree. "There was a lot of ridiculous hand-wringing," one staffer says. "But the fact is that Stanley is just a bully—a mean guy with a violent streak and a dumb schoolyard attitude."

For all his bravado, Crouch retreated to an editor's cubicle after being given notice, and wept. "Now I've really done it," he moaned. Since leaving the newspaper, however, he has adopted a more cavalier attitude. "The two best things that have ever happened to me were being fired by the *Voice* and being hired by the *Voice*—in that order," he says.

PERHAPS getting fired *was* the best thing that could have happened. Within two years, his essay collection "Notes of a Hanging Judge" was being praised by the kinds of people who never read the *Voice*. He received a Whiting fellowship and a MacArthur "genius" grant. In 1991, he became the artistic consultant to the Jazz at Lincoln Center program, joining Marsalis to run the influential series.

With this power came controversy. The Lincoln Center program has received attacks from all directions. Conservatives decry Marsalis and Crouch as racists for excluding white musicians and composers. "They're talking about race, not aesthetics, and the fact is that this isn't an affirmative-action program," Crouch snaps. With equal fervor, however, progressives accuse the program of pushing

"A man's mind, stretched by a new idea, can never go back to its original dimensions."
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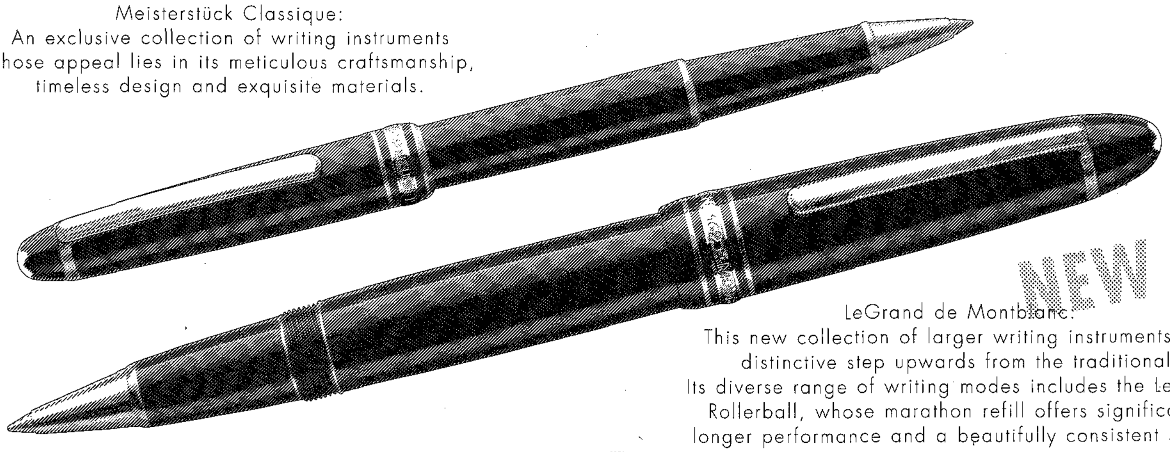

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a traditionalist agenda that ignores jazz after 1969. "Lincoln Center won't play our music," says Kunle Mwanga, a friend of Crouch's who has managed Ornette Coleman and other avant-garde musicians. "But the most hypocritical thing is that the series is being run by people whose entire reputations rest on avant-garde music." Crouch is reluctant to discuss the much covered controversy, but says that he could easily call his opponents' bluff. "The real problem with the avant-garde is that many of them simply can't play," he explains.

Whatever else one says about Marsalis, nobody has ever doubted his extraordinary skill as an instrumentalist. "The most startling member of the band is 19-year-old trumpeter, Wynton Marsalis," Crouch wrote in a brief 1981 review of Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers. "The ease with which he covers the entire range of the horn, his big tone and superb articulation, turn both musicians and listeners around."

And Crouch was turned around as well. Since coming to New York, he had been extremely close to the saxophonist David Murray. But in the eighties, as he gave less encouragement to the avant-garde music with which Murray was identified and began spending more time with Marsalis, some people in the jazz world speculated that Crouch had switched his allegiance to someone who was more commercially promising. No matter what Crouch's motivation was, he quickly established himself as Marsalis's mentor, taking responsibility for widening his new protégé's cultural knowledge with trips to the Metropolitan Museum and with reading lists of books by Homer, Malraux, Ellison, and Mann. Today, Marsalis calls Crouch "the professor of connection." He recalls, "When we first met, Crouch invited me to have dinner with his old lady. People just don't do that kind of thing up here; I felt like I was back in the South. He asked me what I thought of people like Ornette Coleman. Although I had never actually listened to him, I said, 'Aw, man, that stuff is just plain *out*.' So a little later Stanley put on this record of some fantastic alto stuff and asked me 'Hey, man, what do you think of this?' and I said 'Wow, I never heard Bird play like that!' and he said 'He didn't—that's Ornette Coleman.'" Marsalis proved an eager and impressionable student. During one conversation, Crouch mentioned that Marsalis could expand his

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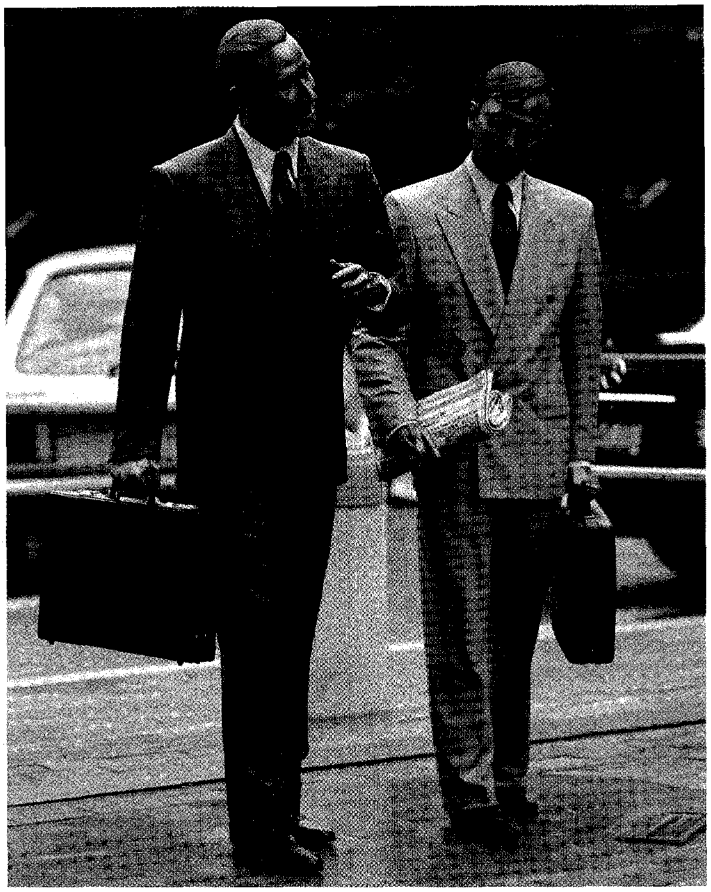

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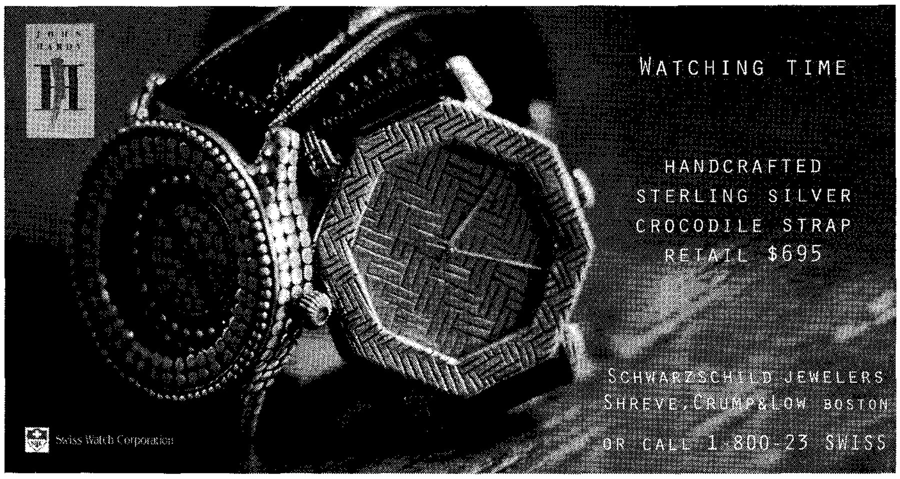

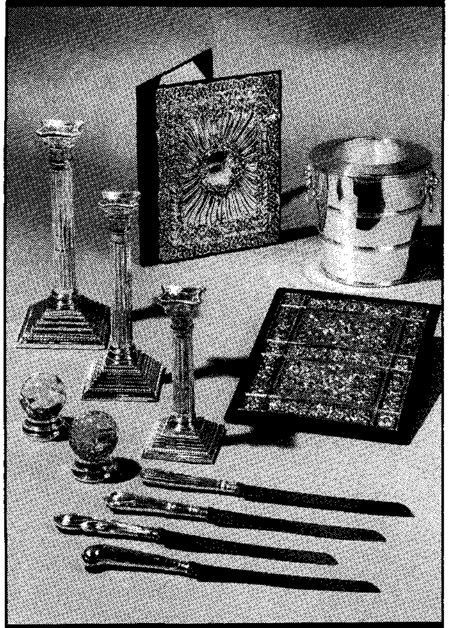

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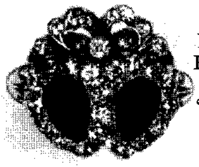

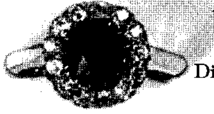

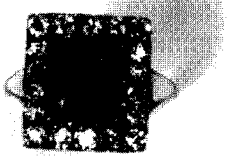

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FAIR WARNING

Parked in your battered Mustang
a little way into the woods,
we watched rain glisten on glass.
I asked if you had written to Leonard.
You said, "No, when friends move away
they go out of my life."

Earlier, in our ecstasy,
I thought: Even dying would be joy
if you leaned over me then
in that hour of passage,
your cool, talismanic fingers
touching my eyes shut.

Now inexorable miles of highways,
tollbooths, drawbridges
spun before my sight.
Shafts of gear and brake
came between our bodies.
I said, "Thanks for the warning."

But I loved you long after
our family moved a continent away,
felt your hands and words
come between me and the wheel,
driving alone at night
into treeless hills.

—VIRGINIA HAMILTON ADAIR

range of tone colors by experimenting with mutes. When Crouch saw him perform a few weeks later, an entire tableful of mutes sat next to the bandstand.

Crouch encouraged Marsalis to pay more attention to jazz's great composers. "When I was twenty, Crouch brought the Smithsonian collection of Duke Ellington by and said, 'Man, you ought to listen to Duke,'" Marsalis says. "I didn't like his stuff, because I had grown up rooted in the nineteen-seventies funk philosophy—listening to Ellington was unheard of. Finally, after a year, I started to like it. But I was intimidated, and told Crouch, 'This stuff Duke writes is so *complex* I could *never* figure it out,' and Crouch said, 'Hey, man, you never know what you can do in ten years.'"

In May of 1992, the *Times* hailed Marsalis's hour-and-a-half-long jazz epic "In This House, On This Morning," comparing the music to Ellington's Sacred Concerts. Meanwhile, many people began to wonder whether Marsalis had become Crouch's mouthpiece. "Their relationship certainly isn't unprecedented, but out in the street the word is that he has become the mind of Wynton," the critic Thulani Davis says.

If Crouch had begun to ease away from the avant-garde at the *Voice*, his association with Marsalis and Lincoln Center completed the move. Once an avid proponent of the avant-garde, he was now leading the backlash against it. There was nothing subtle about Crouch's volte-face. "He is of that very rare breed, the magician, the interpreter, the visionary," Crouch had gushed about Cecil Taylor in a 1979 review. Thirteen years later, Taylor and his sidemen embodied everything wrong in jazz: "I have rarely felt as much gloom in face of waste," Crouch wrote in the *Voice*.

Like previous shifts in his thinking, this one took place under the influence of *his* mentor, Albert Murray. "I told Crouch that if he really wanted to understand the avant-garde, he had to analyze the phrase on its most literal level," Mur-

Jean Paul
GAULTIER
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NEIMAN MARCUS
BLOOMINGDALE'S

ray says. " 'Avant-garde' means 'advance party'—it's a military metaphor. The marines, the commandos, in a war—they're the shock troops and are therefore expendable. You can't make a whole *career* out of being in the avant-garde, because the guys who secure the beachhead always end up dead or wounded."

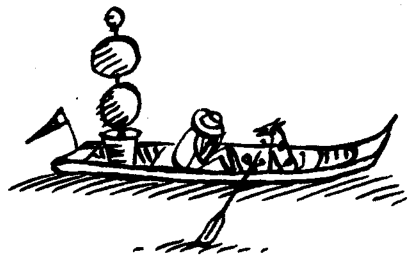
From Crouch's rejection of the avant-garde has emerged a theory of music in which the forces of barbarism and the forces of civilization compete in a battle that is at once aesthetic and ethical. "Just turn on MTV and see what kind of condition we are in—anything working against that is good," Crouch says. "Rock and roll and rap are about adolescent sentiments, which are completely foreign to jazz. In jazz, the focus is on adult experiences, and the skills required to express them are far more sophisticated than in rock, because they are of greater emotional complexity. It's good for young people to test themselves in the arena of jazz, because it forces them to confront the fact that there are some things out there which are more profound than what they're dealing with."

While it's not clear how many people share Crouch's ethical philosophy of music, there is no disputing the fact that his and Marsalis's efforts have transformed the jazz world. "Stanley is one of the great paternalists of our time," the *Times'* Peter Watrous declares. "He wants to multiply the number of people who think like him, and among jazz musicians his view *has* become prevalent. All young jazz musicians coming up today realize that they have to know blues and swing—which are at the core of all jazz from Armstrong to Marsalis—and this simply wasn't the case fifteen years ago. Wynton and Stanley are responsible for that. Therein lies the whole story of the jazz renaissance."

It would be no great exaggeration to say that "First Snow in Kokomo" contains every thought that Stanley Crouch has ever had. Bursting with references to gangsters, black nationalists, Hemingway, Homer, Watts, Paris, Jews, jazz, Africa, interracial romance, and politics, it offers a guided tour through the Crouchian unconscious. Originally conceived as a short story, "Kokomo" was a mere fifty pages long when the writer Steve Cannon first read it. "I said, 'You got it all right there, just don't fuck with it'—but he didn't listen," Cannon says. "Now he's done put the whole history of the universe in that damn thing!"

The sprawling novel in progress is the story of Kelvin Thomson, a black writer who has returned to America after twenty years abroad. Kelvin is writing a memoir to help him make sense of his existential dislocation: part of the second "lost generation," he left America just as the civil-rights movement was imploding, and returns from Paris to find America mired in racial chaos. Crouch says, "I want to create an antiphonal relationship between the sixties and other periods in history when things fell apart, in order to explain exactly *how* a generation's mind changed, *how* we went from the high-mindedness of the civil-rights movement to the anything-goes attitude of the seventies. *That* story has never really been told." Much of the novel takes place in the United States—where Kelvin is involved with a petite Jewish student, who bears a striking resemblance to Lynda Obst—but its best scenes are in Paris, the city where (as Kelvin rhapsodizes) "Charlie Parker canceled the checks of clichés with his alto saxophone, then partied in Fontainebleau like a nappy-headed Napoleon who had no idea what humiliation and exile the snows of Russia would predict." Occasionally, the novel reads like multiculturalism run amok: "I thought of the Chinese journalist in the Bugs Bunny T-shirt that I had seen speaking of the wonders of American ice cream and holding his Amish girlfriend's hand on the Seine." But Crouch sees "Kokomo" as a corrective to the provincialism he finds in so much fiction by or about African-Americans. "I wanted to do something that I hadn't seen in most novels about Negroes, which is to put them in the world," he says. "Not just in the urban North or the rural South, but to place them in a variety of situations where they have to deal with the world in all its richness and complexity."

In the past few weeks, Crouch has been in great demand as an O.J. commentator and has been writing essays on the subject for *Esquire* and the L.A. *Times.* "First Snow in Kokomo" remains unfinished, and a looming stack of untranscribed interview tapes for the Charlie Parker biography gathers dust on the mantelpiece. For all his intelligence and charisma, Stanley Crouch is himself very much a work in progress—something of which he is aware.



"My real ambition hasn't been achieved, because it exists on so many different levels," he says. "If I can bring off what I want to do in the Parker book, then I'll have written a major biography. With 'Notes of a Hanging Judge' I think I've already produced something that stands up there with Ellison's 'Shadow and Act' and Murray's 'The Omni-Americans.' Then there's 'First Snow in Kokomo,' which has sections that—if I can get the rest working—will elevate it above ninety-five per cent of contemporary American fiction."

Grand claims, certainly, but it would be disappointing if he were to make anything else. Measuring himself against his literary heroes, Crouch would rather fail trying to fulfill an enormous promise than succeed more modestly.

"In 1990, I went to the National Book Awards with the novelist Charles Johnson," he recalls. "When we walked in, Ellison was talking to Saul Bellow, who had this sharp tuxedo. But that night I had them all. I was wearing a black silk bow tie, gray-and-black checked pants, and a black cashmere jacket. Man, I was like black *steam.* So Bellow, whom I had never met, walks right over to me, touches my jacket, and says, 'Ah, it feels as good as it looks,' and then we got talking. With Ellison and Bellow only a few feet apart, the energy in the room was amazing; it was one of the greatest literary moments of my life. Charles won the award for 'Middle Passage,' and in his acceptance speech he honored Ellison. Then Bellow got an award and spoke of 'Ralph Ellison, about whom too much cannot be said.' I was sitting across from Ellison, watching him, and thought, Man, this is *deep.* Being there was a tremendous experience. Once I knew I had climbed over that fence without tearing my pants—that is, the fence of Murray, Ellison, and Bellow—I was finally in the yard I wanted to be in. Now, whether I can actually plant something there that will grow to the height of what they did, that is another question. But that night I knew I'd gotten over the fence. That's the way I look at it." ♦

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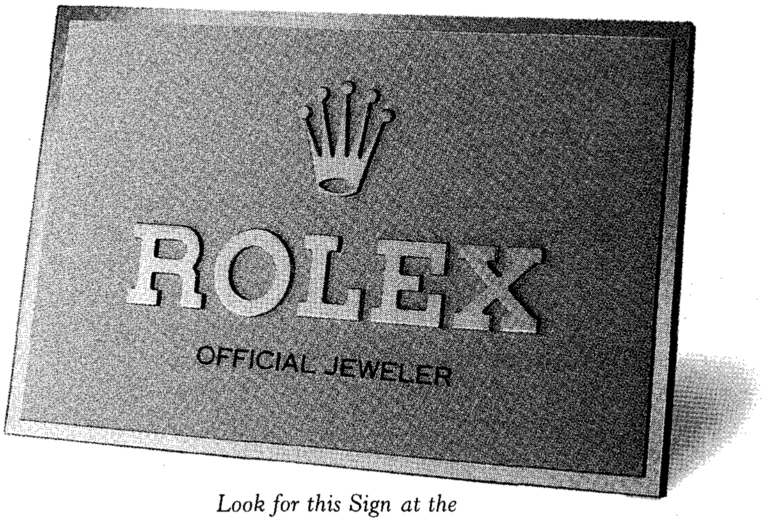

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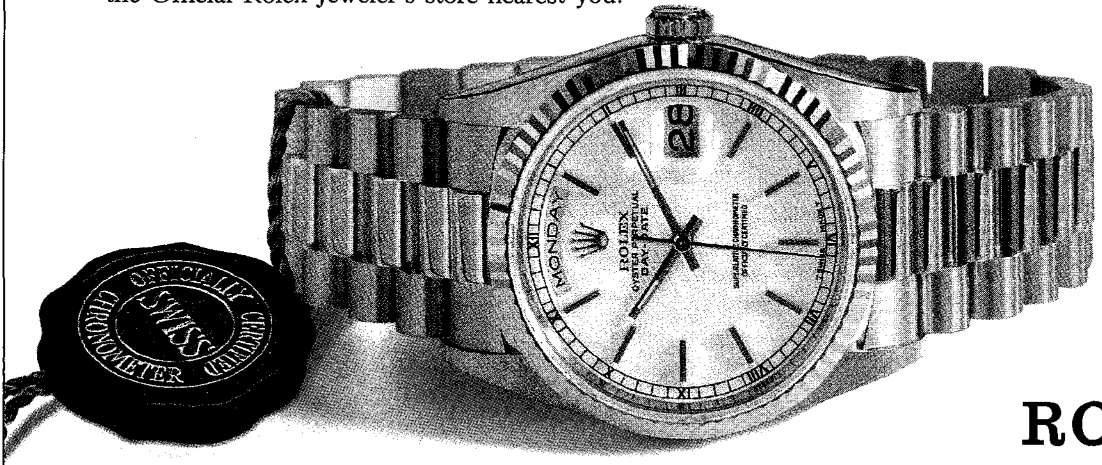

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A CRITIC AT LARGE

JUNGLE FEVER

Why is Joseph Conrad under suspicion? The author reports on an impassioned debate surrounding "Heart of Darkness."

BY DAVID DENBY

"WHO here comes from a savage race?" Professor James Shapiro shouted at his students. "We all come from Africa," said the one African-American in the class, whom I'll call Henry, calmly referring to the supposition among most anthropologists that human life originated in sub-Saharan Africa. What Henry was saying was that there are no racial hierarchies among peoples—that we're all "savages."

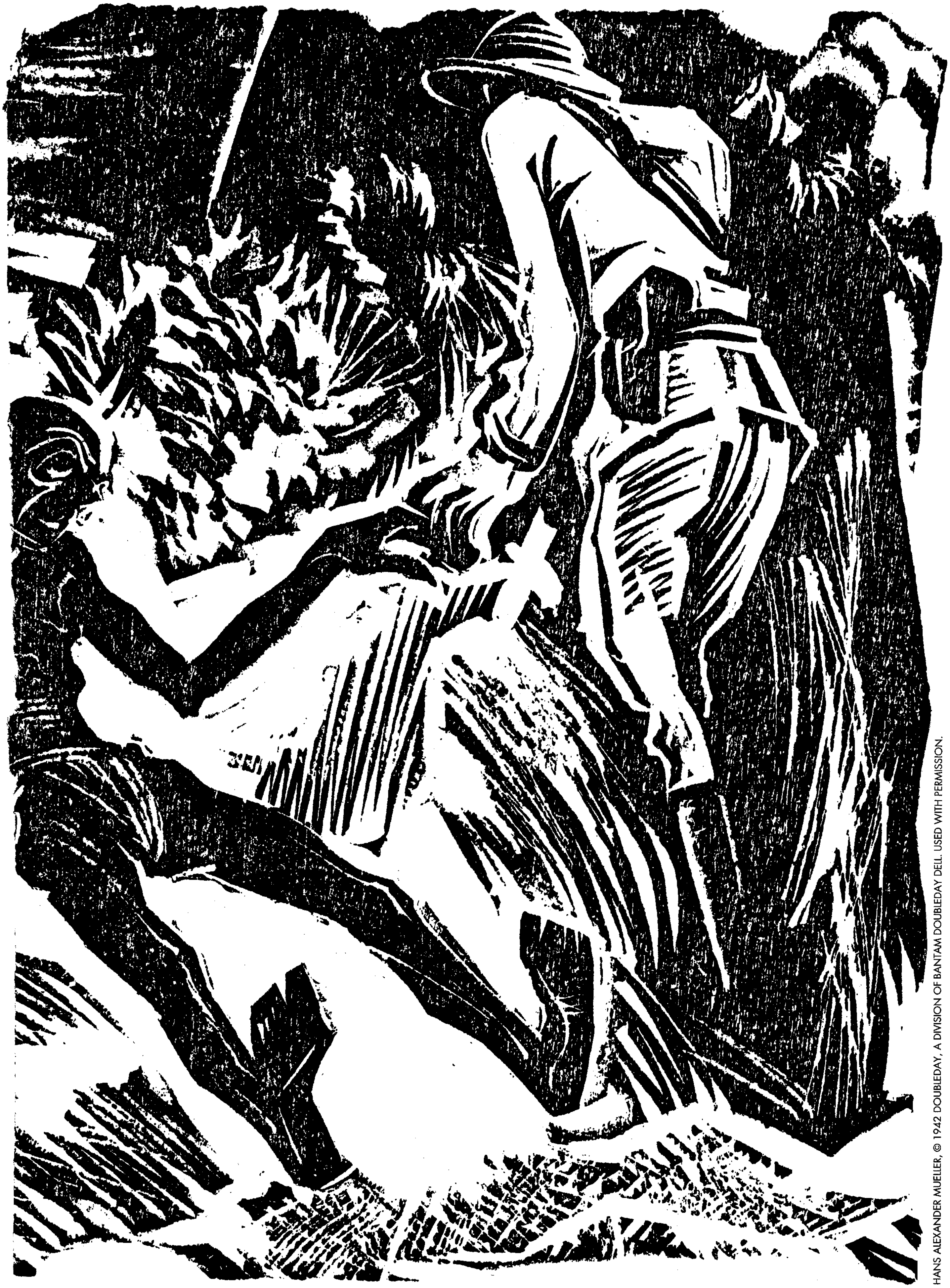
Shapiro smiled. It was not, I thought, exactly the answer he had been looking for, but it was a good answer. Then he was off again. "Are you natural?" he roared at a girl sitting near his end of the seminar table. "What are the constraints for you? What are the rivets? Why are you here getting civilized, reading Lit Hum?"

It was the end of the academic year, and the mood had grown agitated, burdened, portentous. In short, we were reading Joseph Conrad, the final author in Columbia's Literature Humanities (or Lit Hum) course, one of the two famous "great books" courses that have long been required of all Columbia College undergraduates. Both Lit Hum and the other course, Contemporary Civilization, are devoted to the much ridiculed "narrative" of Western culture, the list of classics, which, in the case of Lit Hum, begins with Homer and ends, chronologically speaking, with Virginia Woolf. I was spending the year reading the same books and sitting in on the Lit Hum classes, which were taught entirely in sections; there were no lectures. At the end of the year, the individual instructors were allotted a week for a free choice. Some teachers chose works by Dostoyevski or Mann or Gide or Borges. Shapiro, a Shakespeare scholar from the Department of English and Comparative Literature (his book "Shakespeare and the Jews" will be published by Columbia University Press in January), chose Conrad.

The terms of Shapiro's rhetorical questions—savagery, civilization, constraints, rivets—were drawn from Conrad's great novella of colonial depredation, "Heart of Darkness," and the students, almost all of them freshmen, were electrified. Almost a hundred years old, and familiar to generations of readers, Conrad's little book has lost none of its power to amaze and appall: it remains, in many places, an essential starting point for discussions of modernism, imperialism, the hypocrisies and glories of the West, and the ambiguities of "civilization." Critics by the dozen have subjected it to symbolic, mythological, and psychoanalytic interpretation; T. S. Eliot used a line from it as an epigraph for "The Hollow Men," and Hemingway and Faulkner were much impressed by it, as were Orson Welles and Francis Ford Coppola, who employed it as the ground plan for his despairing epic of Americans in Vietnam, "Apocalypse Now."

In recent years, however, Conrad—and particularly "Heart of Darkness"—has fallen under a cloud of suspicion in the academy. In the curious language of the tribe, the book has become "a site of contestation." After all, Conrad offered a nineteenth-century European's view of Africans as primitive. He attacked Belgian imperialism and in the same breath seemed to praise the British variety. In 1975, the distinguished Nigerian novelist and essayist Chinua Achebe assailed "Heart of Darkness" as racist and called for its elimination from the

A woodcut from a 1942 American edition of Conrad's "Heart of Darkness," a book that has now become "a site of contestation."



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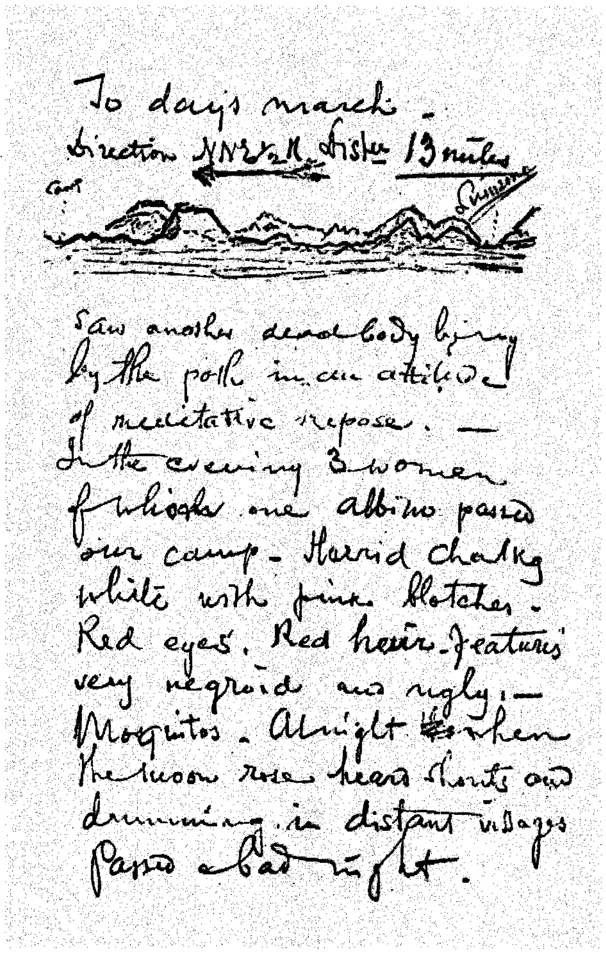
canon of Western classics. And recently Edward W. Said, one of the most famous critics and scholars at Columbia today, has been raising hostile and undermining questions about it. Certainly Said is no breaker of canons. But if Conrad were somehow discredited, one could hardly imagine a more successful challenge to what the academic left has repeatedly deplored as the "hegemonic discourse" of the classic Western texts. There is also the inescapable question of justice to Conrad himself.



To days march -
Direction NNE½N. distce 13 miles

Camp

Sunset

Saw another dead body lying by the path in an attitude of meditative repose. — In the evening 3 women of whom one albino passed our camp - Horrid chalky white with pink blotches. Red eyes. Red hair. features very negroid and ugly. — Mosquitos. At night when the moon rose heard shouts and drumming in distant villages. Passed a bad night.

Conrad in 1904 and an entry from his Congo diary. Can a writer be condemned for writing within the confines of his own time?

LEFT: HOUGHTON LIBRARY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY; RIGHT: CULVER PICTURES

WRITTEN in a little more than two months, the last of 1898 and the first of 1899, "Heart of Darkness" is both the story of a journey and a kind of morbid fairy tale. Marlow, Conrad's narrator and familiar alter ego, a British merchant seaman of the eighteen-nineties, travels up the Congo in the service of a rapacious Belgian trading company, hoping to retrieve the company's brilliant representative and ivory trader, Mr. Kurtz, who has mysteriously grown silent. The great Mr. Kurtz! In Africa, everyone gossips about him, envies him, and, with rare exception, loathes him. The flower of European civilization ("all Europe contributed to the making of Kurtz"), exemplar of light and compassion, journalist, artist, humanist, Kurtz has gone way upriver and at times well into the jungle, abandoning himself to certain . . . practices. Rifle in hand, he has set himself up as god or devil in ascendancy over the Africans. Conrad is notoriously vague about what Kurtz actually does, but if you said "kills some people, has sex with others, steals all the ivory," you would not, I believe, be far wrong. In Kurtz, the alleged benevolence of colonialism has flowered into criminality. Marlow's voyage from Europe to Africa and then upriver to Kurtz's Inner Station is a revelation of the squalors and disasters of the colonial "mission"; it is also, in Marlow's mind, a journey back to the beginning of creation, when nature reigned exuberant and unrestrained, and a trip figuratively *down* as well, through the levels of the self to repressed and unlawful desires. At death's door, Marlow and Kurtz find each other.

Rereading a work of literature is often a shock, an encounter with an earlier self that has been revised, and I found that I was initially discomforted, as I had not been in the past, by the famous manner—the magnificent, alarmed, and (there is no other word) throbbing excitement of Conrad's laboriously mastered English. Conrad was born in czarist-occupied Poland; though he heard English spoken as a boy (and his father translated Shakespeare), it was his third language, and his prose, now and then, betrays the propensity for high intellectual melodrama and rhymed abstraction ("the fascination of the abomination") characteristic of his second language, French. Oh, inexorable, unutterable, unspeakable! The great British critic F. R. Leavis, who loved Conrad, ridiculed such sentences as "It was the stillness of an implacable force brooding over an inscrutable intention." The sound, Leavis thought, was an overwrought, thrilled embrace of strangeness. (In Max Beerbohm's parody: "Silence, the silence murmurous and unquiet of a tropical night, brooded over the hut that, baked through by the sun, sweated a vapour beneath the cynical light of the stars. . . . Within the hut the form of the white man, corpulent and pale, was covered with a mosquito-net that was itself illusory like everything else, only more so.")

Read in isolation, some of Conrad's sentences are certainly a howl, but one reads them in isolation only in criticism like Leavis's or Achebe's. Reading the tale straight through, I lost my discomfort after twenty pages or so and fell hopelessly under Conrad's spell; thereafter, even his most heavily freighted constructions dropped into place, summing up the many specific matters that had come before. Marlow speaks:

> "Going up that river was like travelling back to the earliest beginnings of the world, when vegetation rioted on the earth and the big trees were kings. An empty stream, a great silence, an impenetrable forest. The air was warm, thick, heavy, sluggish. There was no joy in the brilliance of sunshine. The long stretches of the waterway ran on, deserted, into the gloom of overshadowed distances. On silvery sandbanks hippos and alligators sunned themselves side by side. The broadening waters flowed through a mob of wooded islands. You lost your way on that river as you would in a desert and butted all day long against shoals trying to find the challenge till you thought yourself bewitched and cut off for ever from everything you had known once—somewhere—far away—in another existence perhaps. There were moments when one's past came back to one, as it will sometimes when you have not a moment to spare to yourself; but it came in the shape of an unrestful and noisy dream remembered with wonder amongst the overwhelming realities of this strange world of plants and water and silence. And this stillness of life did not in the least resemble a peace. It was the stillness of an implacable force brooding over an inscrutable intention."

In one sense, the writing now seemed close to the movies: it revelled in sensation and atmosphere, in extreme acts and grotesque violence (however indirectly presented), in shivering enigmas and richly phrased premonitions and frights. In other ways, though, "Heart of Darkness" was modernism at its most intellectually bracing, with tonalities, entirely contemporary and distanced, that I had failed to notice when I was younger—immense pride and immense contempt; a mood of barely contained revolt; and sardonic humor that verged on malevolence:

> "I don't pretend to say that steamboat floated all the time. More than once she had to wade for a bit, with twenty cannibals splashing around and pushing. We had enlisted some of these chaps on the way for a crew. Fine fellows—cannibals—in their place. They were men one could work with, and I am grateful to them. And, after all, they did not eat each other before my face: they had brought along a provision of hippo-meat which went rotten and made the mystery of the wilderness stink in my nostrils. Phoo! I can sniff it now. I had the Manager on board and three or four pilgrims [white traders] with their staves—all complete. Sometimes we came upon a station close by the bank clinging to the skirts of the unknown, and the white men rushing out of a tumble-down hovel with great gestures of joy and surprise and welcome seemed very strange, had the appearance of being held there captive by a spell. The word 'ivory' would ring in the air for a while—and on we went again into the silence, along empty reaches, round the still bends, between the high walls of our winding way, reverberating in hollow claps the ponderous beat of the stern-wheel."

Out of sight of their countrymen back home, who continue to cloak the colonial mission in the language of Christian charity and improvement, the "pilgrims" have become rapacious and cruel. The cannibals eating hippo meat practice restraint; the Europeans do not. That was the point of Shapiro's taunting initial sally: "savagery" is inherent in all of us, including the most "civilized," for we live, according to Conrad, in a brief interlude between innumerable centuries of darkness and the darkness yet to come. Only the rivets, desperately needed to repair Marlow's pathetic steamboat, offer stability—the rivets and the ship itself and the codes of seamanship and duty are all that hold life together in a time of moral anarchy. Marlow, meeting Kurtz at last, despises him for letting go—and at the same time, with breathtaking ambivalence, admires him for going all the way to the bottom of his soul and discovering there, at the point of death, a judgment of his own life. It is perhaps the most famous death scene written since Shakespeare:

> "Anything approaching the change that came over his features I have never seen before and hope never to see again. Oh, I wasn't touched. I was fascinated. It was as though a veil had been rent. I saw on that ivory face the expression of sombre pride, of ruthless power, of craven terror—of an intense and hopeless despair. Did he live his life again in every detail of desire, temptation, and surrender during that supreme moment of complete knowledge? He cried in a whisper at some image, at some vision—he cried out twice, a cry that was no more than a breath:
>
> " 'The horror! The horror!' "

Much dispute and occasional merriment have long attended the question of what, exactly, Kurtz means by the melodramatic exclamation "The horror!" But surely one of the things he means is his long revelling in "abominations"—his own internal collapse. Shapiro's opening questions set up a reading of the novella that interrogated the Western civilization of which Kurtz is the supreme representative and of which the students, in their youthful way, were representatives as well.

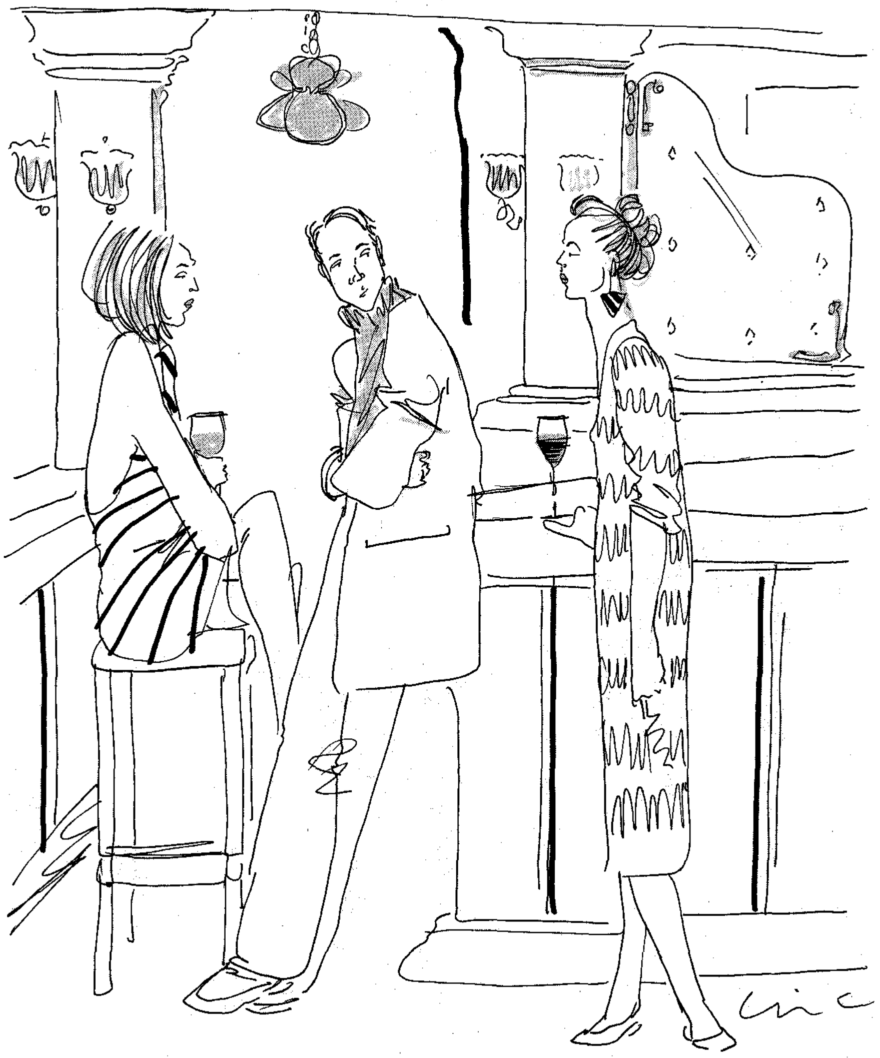
WHEN Shapiro asked the class why they thought he had chosen "Heart of Darkness," hands were going up before he had finished his question.

"You chose it because the whole core curriculum is embodied in Kurtz," said Henry, who had answered Shapiro's earlier question. "We embody this knowledge, and the book asks, Do we fall into the void—do we drown or come out with a stronger sense of self?"

Henry had turned the book into a test of the course and of himself. Conrad had great personal significance for him, which didn't surprise me. An African-American from Baltimore, Henry, in his sophomore year at Columbia, had evolved into a fervent Nietzschean, and, though Conrad claimed to dislike Nietzsche, this was a Nietzschean text. The meaning of Henry's life—his personal myth—required (he had said it in class many times) challenge, struggle, and self-transcendence. He was tall and strong, with a flattop "wedge" haircut and a loud, excited voice. Some months after this class, he got himself not tattooed but *branded* with the insignia of his black Columbia fraternity—an act of excruciating irony unavailable to members of the master race. Kurtz, however horrifying, was an exemplar for him as for Conrad's hero, Marlow.

A freshman of Chinese descent from Singapore, who was largely reared on British and Continental literature, also saw the book as a test for Western civilization. But, unlike Henry, she hated the abyss. Kurtz was a seduced man, a portent of disintegration. "Can we deal with the knowledge we are seeking?" she asked. "Or will we say, with Kurtz, 'The horror'?" For her, Kurtz's outburst was an admission of the failure of knowledge.

And many others made similar remarks. All of a sudden, at the end of the course, the students were quite willing to see their year of education in Western classics as problematic. Their reading of "the great books" could be affirmed only



"Have you met Amanda—the endless fuse?"

if it was simultaneously questioned. No doubt Shapiro's rhetorical questions had shaped their responses, but still their intensity surprised me.

"The book is a kind of test," said a student from the Washington, D.C., area, who was normally a polite, bland schoolboy type. "Does its existence redeem the male hegemonic line of culture? Does it redeem education in this tradition?" By which I believe that he also meant to ask, "Could the existence of such a book redeem the crimes of imperialism?" That, at any rate, was my question.

The students were in good form, bold and free, and as the class went on they expounded certain points in the text, some of them holding the little paperback in their hands like preachers before the faithful. All year long, Shapiro had struggled to get them to read aloud, and with some emotional commitment to the words. And all too often they had droned, as if they were reading from a computer manual. But now they read aloud spontaneously, and their voices were alive, even ringing.

"For this course, it's a kind of summing up, isn't it?" Shapiro said. "We began with the journey to Troy."

"It has a resemblance to all the journeys through Hell we've read," said a student I will call Alex, a thin, ascetic-looking boy, the son of a professor. He cited the voyages to the underworld in the Odyssey and the Aeneid, and he cited Dante, whom Conrad, in one of his greatest moments, obviously had in mind. Marlow arrives at one of the trading company's stations, a disastrous ramshackle settlement of wrecked machinery and rusting rails, and there encounters, under the trees, dozens of exhausted African workers who have been left to die. "It seemed to me I had stepped into the gloomy circle of some Inferno," he says.

> "They were dying slowly—it was very clear. They were not enemies, they were not criminals, they were nothing earthly now, nothing but black shadows of disease and starvation lying confusedly in the greenish gloom. Brought from all the recesses of the coast in all the legality of time contracts, lost in uncongenial surroundings, fed on unfamiliar food, they sickened, became inefficient, and were then allowed to crawl away and rest. These moribund shapes were free as air—and nearly as thin. I began to distinguish the gleam of the eyes under the trees. Then glancing down I saw a face near my hand. The black bones reclined at full length with one shoulder against the tree, and slowly the eyelids rose and the sunken eyes looked up at me, enormous and vacant, a kind of blind, white flicker in the depths of the orbs which died out slowly. The man seemed young—almost a boy—but you know with them it's hard to tell. I found nothing else to do but to offer him one of my good Swede's ship's biscuits I had in my pocket. The fingers closed slowly on it and held—there was no other movement and no other glance. He had tied a bit of white worsted round his neck—Why? Where did he get it. Was it a badge—an ornament—a charm—a propitiatory act? Was there any idea at all connected with it. It looked startling round his black neck this bit of white thread from beyond the seas.
>
> "Near the same tree two more bundles of acute angles sat with their legs drawn up. One, with his chin propped on his knees, stared at nothing in an intolerable and appalling manner. His brother phantom rested its forehead as if overcome with a great weariness; and all about others were scattered in every pose of contorted collapse, as in some picture of a massacre or a pestilence."

Despite the last sentence, which links the grove of death to ancient and medieval catastrophes, there is a sense here, as many readers have said, of something unprecedented in horror, something new on earth—what later became known as genocide. It is one of Conrad's bitter ironies that at least some of the Europeans forcing the Congolese into labor are "liberals" devoted to the "suppression of savage customs." What they had perpetrated in the Congo was not, perhaps, planned slaughter, but it was a slaughter nonetheless, and some of the students, pointing to the passage, were abashed. Western man had done this. We had created an Inferno on earth. "Heart of Darkness," written at the end of the nineteenth century, resonates unhappily throughout the twentieth. Marlow's shock, his amazement before the sheer strangeness of the ravaged human forms, anticipates what the Allied liberators of the concentration camps felt in 1945. The answer to the question "Does the book redeem the West?" was clear enough: No book can provide expiation for any culture. But if some crimes are irredeemable, a frank acknowledgment of the crime might lead to a partial remission of sin. Conrad had written such an acknowledgment.

That was the heart of the liberal reading, and Shapiro's students rose to it willingly, gravely, ardently—and then, all of a sudden, the class fell into an acrimonious dispute. Alex was not happy with the way Shapiro and the other students were talking about Kurtz and the moral self-judgment of the West. He thought it was glib. He couldn't see the book in apocalyptic terms. Kurtz was a criminal, an isolated figure. He was not representative of the West or of anything else. "Why is this a critique of the West?" he demanded. "No culture celebrates men like Kurtz. No culture condones what he did." There was general protest, even a few laughs. "O.K.," he said, yielding a bit. "It can be read as a critique of the West, but not *only* of the West."

From my corner of the room, I took a hard look at him. He was as tight as a drum, dry, a little supercilious. Kurtz had nothing to do with *him*—that was his unmistakable attitude. He denied the connection that the other students acknowledged. He was cut off in some way, withholding himself. Yet I knew this student. I had seen him only in class, but there was something familiar in him that irked me, though exactly what it was I couldn't say. Why was he so dense? The other students were not claiming personal responsibility for imperialism or luxuriating in guilt. They were merely admitting participation in an "advanced" civilization that could lose its moral bearings.

Henry, leaning back in his chair—against the wall, behind Alex, who sat at the table—insisted on an existential reading. "Kurtz is an Everyman figure," he said. "He gets down to the soul, below the layers of parents, religion, society."

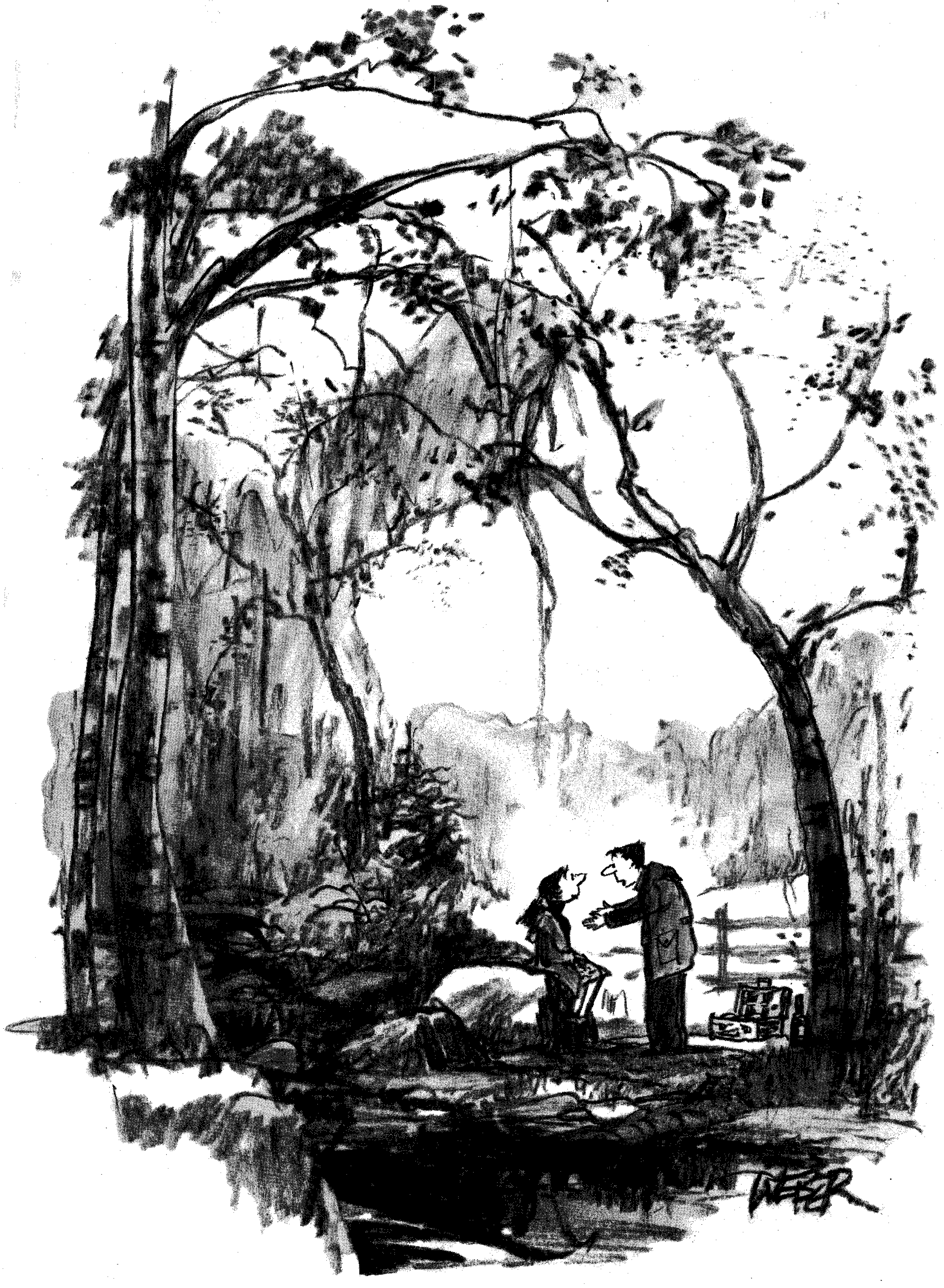
Alex hotly disagreed. They were talking past each other, offering different angles of approach, but there was an edge to their voices which suggested an animus that went beyond mere disagreement. There was an awkward pause, and some of the students stirred uneasily. I had never seen these two quarrel in the past, and what they said presented no grounds for anger, but when each repeated his position, anger filled the room. Shapiro tried to calm things down, and the other students looked at one another in wonder and alarm. The argument between Alex and Henry wasn't about race, yet race unmistakably hovered over it. In a tangent, Henry brought up the way Conrad, reflecting European assumptions of his time, portrayed the Africans as wild and primitive. He started to make a case similar to Achebe's (whose hostile essay is included in the current Norton Critical Edition of the text), then stopped in midsentence, abruptly abandoning his position. In our class on "King Lear" and at other times over the past several months, he had argued explicitly as a black man. But at that moment he wasn't interested. A greater urgency overcame him—not the racial but the existential issue, his own pressing need for identification not just as an African-American but as an embattled man. "Good and evil are conventions," he said. "They collapse under stress." And this, he insisted, was true for everyone.

"The book is also about the *difference* between good and evil," Alex retorted. "Everyone *judges* Kurtz." But this is not correct. Marlow judges Kurtz; Conrad judges Kurtz. But back in Brussels he is mourned as an apostle of enlightenment.

I looked a little closer. Alex was like the fabled "wicked son" in the Passover celebration, the one who says to the others "Why is this important to *you*?"—denying a personal connection with an event of mesmerizing significance. I knew him, all right. A pale, narrow face, a bony nose surmounted by glasses, a paucity of flesh, a general air of asexual arrogance. He was very bright and very young. Of all the students in Shapiro's class, he was—I saw it now—the closest to what I had been at eighteen or nineteen. He was incomparably more self-assured and articulate, but I recognized him all too well. And I was startled. The middle-aged reader, uneasy with earlier versions of himself, little expects his simulacrum to rise up as a walking ghost.

Henry sat sheathed in a green turtleneck sweater, dark glasses, and a baseball cap; I couldn't see his expression. But Shapiro's was clear: he was not happy. He had perhaps gone a little too far with his rhetorical questions, striking sparks that threatened to turn into a conflagration, and he quickly moved the conversation in a different direction, getting the students to explicate Conrad's use of the word "darkness." Conrad lets us know that even England—where Marlow sits, telling his story—used to be one of the dark places of the earth. For a while, teacher and students explicated the text in a neutral way. All year long, Shapiro had gone back and forth between analyzing the structure and language of the books and attacking the

DANCE STUDIO
JAZZ-BALLET-LAP
Lorenz



"I need you, Roberta. Deep inside me there's a married man aching to get out."

students' complacencies with rhetorical questions. But sober analysis wasn't what he wanted, not of this text, and he soon returned to the complicity of the West, and even the Western universities, in a policy that King Leopold II of the Belgians—the man responsible for some of the worst atrocities of colonial Africa—always referred to as noble and self-sacrificing.

"How else would you guys be civilized except for 'the noble cause'?" Shapiro said. "You guys are all products of the noble cause. Columbia's motto, translated from the Latin, is 'In Thy light shall we see light.' That's the light that is supposed to penetrate the heart of darkness, isn't it?"

"But enlightenment comes only by way of darkness," said Henry, still at it, and Alex demurred angrily again—no darkness for him—and for a terrible moment I thought they were actually going to come to blows. The women in the class, who for the most part had been silent during these exchanges, were appalled and afterward muttered angrily, "It's a boy thing, macho showing off. 'Who's the biggest intellectual?' " True, but maybe it was also a race thing. Though Shapiro restored order, something had broken, and the class, which had begun so well, with everyone joining in and expounding, had come unriveted.

Is "Heart of Darkness" a depraved book? The following is one of the passages Chinua Achebe deplores as racist:

> "We were wanderers on a prehistoric earth, on an earth that wore the aspect of an unknown planet. We could have fancied ourselves the first of men taking possession of an accursed inheritance, to be subdued at the cost of profound anguish and of excessive toil. But suddenly as we struggled round a bend there would be a glimpse of rush walls, of peaked grass-roofs, a burst of yells, a whirl of black limbs, a mass of hands clapping, of feet stamping, of bodies swaying, of eyes rolling under the droop of heavy and motionless foliage. The steamer toiled along slowly on the edge of a black and incomprehensible frenzy. The prehistoric man was cursing us, praying to us, welcoming us—who could tell? We were cut off from the comprehension of our surroundings; we glided past like phantoms, wondering and secretly appalled, as sane men would be before an enthusiastic outbreak in a madhouse. We could not understand because we were too far and could not remember because we were travelling in the night of first ages, of those ages that are gone, leaving hardly a sign—and no memories.
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> "The earth seemed unearthly. We are accustomed to look upon the shackled form of a conquered monster, but there—there you could look at a thing monstrous and free. It was unearthly and the men were . . . No they were not inhuman. Well, you know that was the worst of it—this suspicion of their not being inhuman. It would come slowly to one. They howled and leaped and spun and made horrid faces, but what thrilled you was just the thought of their humanity—like yours—the thought of your remote kinship with this wild and passionate uproar. Ugly. Yes, it was ugly enough, but if you were man enough you would admit to yourself that there was in you just the faintest trace of a response to the terrible frankness of that noise, a dim suspicion of there being a meaning in it which you—you so remote from the night of first ages—could comprehend."

Achebe believes that "Heart of Darkness" is an example of the Western habit of setting up Africa "as a foil to Europe, a place of negations . . . in comparison with which Europe's own state of spiritual grace will be manifest." Conrad, obsessed with the black skin of Africans, had as his real purpose the desire to comfort Europeans in their sense of superiority: " 'Heart of Darkness' projects the image of Africa as 'the other world,' the antithesis of Europe and therefore of civilization, a place where man's vaunted intelligence and refinement are finally mocked by triumphant bestiality." Achebe dismisses the grove-of-death passage and others like it as "bleeding-heart sentiments," mere decoration in a book that "parades in the most vulgar fashion prejudices and insults from which a section of mankind has suffered untold agonies and atrocities in the past and continues to do so in many ways and many places today," and he adds, "I am talking about a story in which the very humanity of black people is called in question."

Chinua Achebe has written at least one great novel, "Things Fall Apart" (1958), a book I love and from which I have learned a great deal. Yet this article on Conrad (originally a speech delivered at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, in 1975, and revised for the third Norton edition of the novel in 1987 and reprinted as well in Achebe's 1988 collection of essays, "Hopes and Impediments") is an act of rhetorical violence, and I recoiled from it. Achebe regards the book not as an expression of its time or as the elaboration of a fictional situation, in which a white man's fears of the unknown are accurately represented, but as a general slander against Africans, a simple racial attack. As far as Achebe is concerned, Africans have struggled to free themselves from the prison of colonial discourse, and for him reading Conrad meant reëntering the prison: "Heart of Darkness" is a book in which Europeans consistently have the upper hand.

Reading Achebe, I wanted to argue that most of the students in the Lit Hum class—not Europeans but an American élite—had seen "Heart of Darkness" as a representation of the West's infamy, and hardly as an affirmation of its "spiritual grace." I wanted to argue as well that everything in "Heart of Darkness"—not just the spectacular frights of the African jungle but everything, including the city of Brussels and Marlow's perception of every white character—is rendered sardonically and nightmarishly as an experience of estrangement and displacement. Conrad certainly describes the Africans gesticulating on the riverbank as a violently incomprehensible "other." But consider the fictional situation! Having arrived fresh from Europe, Marlow, surrounded by jungle, commands a small steamer travelling up the big river en route to an unknown destiny—death, perhaps. He is a character in an adventure story, baffled by strangeness. Achebe might well have preferred that Marlow engage the Africans in conversation or, at least, observe them closely and come to the realization that they, too, are a people, that they, too, are souls, have a destiny, spiritual struggles, triumphs and disasters of selfhood. But could African selfhood be described within this brief narrative, with its extraordinary physical and philosophical momentum, and within Conrad's purpose of exposing the "pitiless folly" of the Europeans? Achebe wants another story, another hero, another consciousness. As it happens, Marlow, regarding the African tribesmen as savage and incomprehensible, nevertheless feels a kinship with them. He recognizes no moral difference between himself and them. It is the Europeans who have been demoralized.

But what's the use? Though Achebe is a novelist, not a scholar, variants of his critique have appeared in many academic settings and in response to many classic works. Such publications as *Lingua Franca* are often filled with ads from university presses for books about literature and race, literature and gender, literature and empire. Whatever these scholars are doing in the classroom, they are seeking to make their reputations outside the classroom with politicized views of literature. F. R. Leavis's criterion of greatness in literature—moral seriousness—has been replaced by the moral aggressiveness of the academic critic in nailing the author to whatever power formation existed around him. "Heart of Darkness" could indeed be read as racist by anyone sufficiently angry to ignore its fictional strategies, its palpable anguish, and the many differences between Conrad's eighteen-nineties consciousness of race and our own. At the same time, parts of the academic left now consider the old way of reading fiction for pleasure, for enchantment—my falling hopelessly under Conrad's spell—to be naïve, an unconscious submission to political values whose nature is disguised precisely by the pleasures of the narrative. In some quarters, pleasure in reading has itself become a political error, rather like sex in Orwell's "1984."

As much as Conrad himself, Edward W. Said is a self-created and ambiguous figure. A Palestinian Christian (from a Protestant family), he was brought up in Jerusalem and Cairo, but has built a formidable career in America, where he has assumed the position of the exiled literary man in extremis—an Arab critic of the West who lives and works in the West, a reader who is at home in Western literature but makes an active case for non-Western literature. Said loathes insularity and parochialism, and has disdained "flat-minded" approaches to reading. Over the years, he has gained many disciples and followers, some of whom he has recently chastised for carrying his moral and political critiques of Western literature to the point of caricature. Said has repeatedly discouraged any attempt to "level" the Western canon.

His most famous work is the remarkable "Orientalism" (1978), a charged analysis of the Western habit of constructing an "exotic" image of the Muslim East as an aid to controlling it. In 1993, Said published "Culture and Imperialism" as a sequel to that book, and part of his intention is to bring to account the great European nineteenth- and twentieth-century writers, examining and judging them as a way of combatting the notion—still alive today, Said says—that Europeans and Americans have the right to govern the inhabitants of the Third World.

Most imaginative writers of the nineteenth century, Said maintains, failed to connect their work, their own spiritual practice, to the squalid operations of colonialism. Such writers as Austen, Carlyle, Thackeray, Dickens, Tennyson, and Flaubert were heroes of culture who either harbored racist views of the subject-people then dominated by the English and the French or merely acquiesced in the material advantages of empire. They took empire for granted as a space in which their characters might roam and prosper; they colluded in evil. Here and there, one could see in their work shameless traces of the subordinated world: a sugar plantation in Antigua whose earnings sustain in English luxury a landed family (the Bertrams) in Austen's "Mansfield Park"; a central character in Dickens's "Great Expectations" (the convict Magwitch) who enriches himself in the "white colony" of Australia and whose secret bequest turns Pip, the novel's young hero, into a "London gentleman." These novels, Said says, could not be fully understood unless their connections to the colonial assumptions and practices in the culture at large were analyzed. But how important, I wonder, is the source of the money to either of these novels? Austen mentions the Antigua plantation only a few times; exactly *where* the Bertrams' money came from clearly did not interest her. And if Magwitch had made his pile not in Australia but in, say, Scotland, by illegally cornering the market in barley or mash, how great a difference would it have made to the structural, thematic, and metaphorical substance of "Great Expectations"? Magwitch would still be a disreputable convict whom Pip would have to reject as a scoundrel or accept as his true spiritual father. Were these novels, as literature, seriously affected by the alleged imperial nexus? Or is Said making lawyerlike points, not out of necessity but merely because they can be made? Indeed, one begins to suspect that a work like "Mansfield Park" is useful to Said precisely because it's such an outlandish example. For if Jane Austen is heavily involved in the creation of imperialism, then every music-hall show, tearoom menu, and floral arrangement is also involved. The West's cultural innocence must be brought to the bar of justice.

In the end, isn't Said's thesis a vast tautology, an assumption that imperialism did, indeed, receive the support of a structure that produced . . . imperialism? By Said's measure, few writers would escape censure. Proust? Indifferent to French exploitation of North African native workers. (And where did the cork that lined the walls of his bedroom come from? Morocco? The very armature of Proust's aesthetic contemplation partakes of imperial domination.) Henry James? Failed to inquire into the

"Nice sonata, but it wouldn't hurt him to comb his hair and smile now and then."

late-nineteenth-century industrial capitalism and overseas expansion that made possible the leisure, the civilized discourse, and the spiritual anguish of so many of his characters. James's celebrated refinement was as much a product and an expression of American imperialism as Theodore Roosevelt's pugnacious jingoism. And so on.

When Said arrives at "Heart of Darkness" (a book he loves), he asserts that Conrad, as much as Marlow and Kurtz, was enclosed within the mind-set of imperial domination and therefore could not imagine any possibilities outside it; that is, Conrad could imagine Africans only as ruled by Europeans. It's perfectly true that "Heart of Darkness" contains a few widely spaced and ambiguous remarks that appear to praise the British variety of overseas domination. But how much do such remarks matter against the overwhelming weight of all the rest—the awful sense of desolation produced by the physical chaos, the death and ravaging cruelty everywhere? What readers remember is the squalor of imperialism, and it's surely misleading for Said to speak of "Heart of Darkness" as a work that was "an organic part of the 'scramble for Africa,'" a work that has functioned ever since to reassure Westerners that they had the right to rule the Third World. If we are to discuss the question of the book's historical effect, shouldn't we ask, on the contrary, whether thousands of European and American readers may not have become *nauseated* by colonialism after reading "Heart of Darkness"? Said is so eager to find the hidden power in "Heart of Darkness" that he underestimates the power of what's on the surface. Here is his summing up:

> Kurtz and Marlow acknowledge the darkness, the former as he is dying, the latter as he reflects retrospectively on the meaning of Kurtz's final words. They (and of course Conrad) are ahead of their time in understanding that what they call "the darkness" has an autonomy of its own, and can reinvade and reclaim what imperialism has taken for *its* own. But Marlow and Kurtz are also creatures of their time and cannot take the next step, which would be to recognize that what they saw, disablingly and disparagingly, as a non-European "darkness" was in fact a non-European world *resisting* imperialism so as one day to regain sovereignty and independence, and not, as Conrad reductively says, to reestablish the darkness. Conrad's tragic limitation is that even though he could see clearly that on one level imperialism was essentially pure dominance and land-grabbing, he could not then conclude that imperialism had to end so that "natives" could lead lives free from European domination. As a creature of his time, Conrad could not grant the natives their freedom, despite his severe critique of the imperialism that enslaved them.

I have read this passage over and over, each time with increasing disbelief. It's not enough that Conrad captured the soul of imperialism, the genocidal elimination of a people forced into labor: no, his "tragic limitation" was his failure to "grant the natives their freedom." Perhaps Said means something fragmentary—a tiny gesture, an implication, a few words that would suggest the liberated future. But I still find the idea bizarre as a suggested improvement of "Heart of Darkness," and my mind is flooded with visions from terrible Hollywood movies. *Mist slowly lifts from thick, dark jungle, revealing a rainbow in the distance; Kurtz, wearing an ivory necklace, gestures to the jungle as he speaks to a magnificent-looking African chief. "Someday your people will throw off the colonial oppressor. Someday your people will be free."*

Dear God, a vision of *freedom*? After the grove of death? Wouldn't such a vision amount to the grossest sentimentality? Instead of doing what Said wants, Conrad says that England, too, has been one of the dark places of the earth. Throughout the book, he insists that the darkness is in all men. Conrad is as stern, unyielding, and pessimistic as Said is right-minded, positive, and banal.

Achebe indulges a similar sentimentality. Conrad, he says, was so obsessed with the savagery of the Africans that he somehow failed to notice that Africans just north of the Congo were creating great works of art—making the masks and other art works that only a few years later would astound such painters as Vlaminck, Derain, Picasso, and Matisse, thereby stimulating a new direction in European art. "The point of all this," Achebe writes, "is to suggest that Conrad's picture of the people of the Congo seems grossly inadequate."

But Conrad certainly did not offer "Heart of Darkness" as "a picture of the peoples of the Congo," any more than Achebe's "Things Fall Apart," set in a Nigerian village, purports to be a rounded picture of the British overlords. Conrad, as much as his master, Henry James, was

"You better get used to all of me, because you'll never get half."

• •

devoted to a ruthless notion of form. Short as it is—only about thirty-five thousand words—"Heart of Darkness" is a mordantly ironic tale of rescue enfolding a philosophical meditation on the complicity between "civilization" and savagery. Conrad practices a narrow economy and omits a great deal. Economy is also a remarkable feature of the art of Chinua Achebe; and no more than Conrad should he be required to render a judgment for all time on every aspect of African civilization.

Achebe wants "Heart of Darkness" ejected from the canon. "The question is whether a novel which celebrates this dehumanization, which depersonalizes a portion of the human race, can be called a great work of art," he writes. "My answer is: No, it cannot." Said, to be sure, would never suggest dropping Conrad from the reading lists. Still, one has to wonder if blaming writers for what they *fail to write about* is not an extraordinarily wrongheaded way of reading them. Among the academic left, literature now inspires restless impatience. Literature excludes: it's about one thing and not another, represents one point of view and not another, "empowers" one class or race but not another. Literature lacks the perfection of justice, in which all voices must be heard, weighed, balanced. European literature, in particular, is guilty of association with the "winners" of history. Jane Austen is culpable because she failed to dramatize the true nature of colonialism; Joseph Conrad is guilty because he *did* dramatize it. They are guilty by definition and by category.

In the end, Achebe's and Said's complaints come down to this: Joseph Conrad lacked the consciousness of race and imperial power which we have today. Poor, stupid Conrad! Trapped in his own time, he could do no more than write his books. A self-approving moral logic has become familiar on the academic left: So-and-so's view of women, people of color, and the powerless lacks our amplitude, our humanity, our insistence on the inclusion in discourse of all people. One might think that elementary candor would require the academy to render gratitude to the older writers for yielding such easily detected follies.

Why am I so angry? A disagreeable essay or book does not spell the end of Western civilization, and liberal humanists, of all people, should be able—even required—to listen to points of view that are contrary to their own. But what Achebe and Said (and a fair number of other politicized critics) are offering is not simply a different interpretation of this or that work but something close to an attack on the moral legitimacy of literature.

SWIMMING IN THE FLOOD

Later he must have watched
the newsreel,

his village erased by water: farmsteads and churches
breaking and floating away

as if by design;
bloated cattle, lumber, bales of straw

turning in local whirlpools; the camera
panning across the surface, finding the odd

rooftop or skeletal tree,
or homing in to focus on a child's

shock-headed doll.
Under it all, his house would be standing intact,

the roses and lime trees, the windows,
the baby grand.

He saw it through the water when he dreamed,
and, waking at night, he remembered the rescue boat,

the chickens at the prow, his neighbor's pig,
the woman beside him clutching a silver frame,

her face dislodged, reduced to a puzzle of bone
and atmosphere, the tremors on her skin

wayward and dark, like shadows crossing a field
of clouded grain.

Later, he would see her on the screen,
trying to smile, as they lifted her onto the dock,

and he'd notice the frame again, baroque and absurd,
and empty, like the faces of the drowned.

—JOHN BURNSIDE

"THERE is no way for me to understand your pain," Henry said the next time the class met, speaking to everyone in general but perhaps to Alex in particular. "Nor is there any way for you to understand mine. The only common ground we have is that we can glimpse the horror."

It was a portentous remark for so young a man, but he backed it up. Launching into a formal presentation of his ideas about "Heart of Darkness," he rose from his seat behind Alex to speak. At one point, shouting with excitement, he brushed past him—"Watch out, Alex!" he warned—and threw some coins into the air, first catching them and then letting them drop to the table, where they landed with a clatter and rolled this way and that. Everyone jumped. "That's what the wilderness does," he said. "It disperses what we try to hold under control. Kurtz went in and saw that chaos."

Henry had a talent for melodrama. "Chaos" was another Conradian notion, and I shuddered; our first class on Conrad had come close to breaking apart. Today, however, Shapiro had restored civility, beginning the class with a sombre speech. Hunching over the long table, his voice low, he said, "I had to feel a little despair the other day." He warned the students against shouting past one another. He spoke very slowly of his own ambivalence in teaching a book that challenges the very nature of Western society. "It's very hard when you teach a course like Lit Hum, which the outside world represents as the normative, or even conservative, view of social values—it's very hard to *find* yourself. As you read Conrad, do you say, 'Am I going to step away from this culture?' Or do you say, 'I'm going to interact with it in some way that recognizes the contradictions and lies that culture tells itself'?"

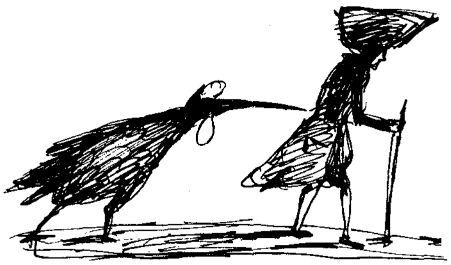
And Shapiro went on, slowly reëstablishing the frame of his class, situating the book in the year's work and in the work of the élite university that sits on a hill above Harlem.

Looking back on our little Kulturkampf, I realize now that however much I disliked Achebe's and Said's approach, they helped me to understand what happened in the classroom. Just as Alex fought so angrily to keep Western civilization untouched by the stain of Kurtz's crimes, I initially wanted "Heart of Darkness" to remain impervious to political criticism. In truth, I don't think any political attack can seriously hurt Conrad's novella. But to maintain that this book is not embedded in the world—to treat it innocently, as earlier critics did, as a garden of symbols, or as a quest for the Grail or the Father, or whatnot—is itself to diminish Conrad's achievement. And to pretend that literature has no political component whatsoever is an equal folly.

However wrong or extreme in individual cases, the academic left has alerted readers to the possible hidden assumptions in language and point of view. Achebe and Said jarred me into seeing, for instance, that Shapiro's way with "Heart of Darkness" was also highly political. I will quickly add that the great value of Shapiro's "liberal" reading is that it did not depend on reductive control of the book's meanings: when the class, provoked by Shapiro's questions, broke down, it did not do so along the clichéd lines of whether Conrad was a racist, or an imperialist. On the contrary, an African-American student had read the book seeking not victimization through literature but self-realization through literature, and white and Asian students, with one exception, had tried in their different ways not to accuse the text but to interrogate themselves. Their responses participated in the liberal consensus of a great university, in which the act of self-criticism is one of the highest goals and a fulfillment of Western education itself. A benevolent politics, but politics nonetheless.

Reading Conrad again, one is struck by his extraordinary unease—and by what he made of it. In the end, his precarious situation both inside and outside imperialism should be seen not as a weakness but as a strength. Yes, Conrad the master seaman had done his time as a colonial employee, working for a Belgian company in 1890, making his own trip up the Congo. He had lived within the consciousness of colonial expansion. But if he had not, could he have written a book like "Heart of Darkness"? Could he have captured with such devastating force the peculiar, hollow triviality of the colonists' ambitions, the self-seeking, the greed, the pettiness, the lies and evasions? Here was the last great Victorian, insisting on responsibility and order, and fighting, at the same time, an exhausting and often excruciating struggle against uncertainty and doubt of every kind, such that he cast every truth in his fictions as a mocking illusion and turned his morally didactic tale into an endlessly provocative and dismaying battle between stoical assumption of duty and perverse complicity in evil. Conrad's sea-captain hero Marlow loathes the monstrous Kurtz, yet feels, after Kurtz's death, an overpowering loyalty to the integrity of what Kurtz discovered in his furious descent into crime.

"The horror" was Conrad's burden as man and artist—the violent contraries that possessed him. But what a yield in art! Certainly T. S. Eliot and others understood "Heart of Darkness" to be one of the essential works of modernism, a new kind of art in which the radically disjunctive experiences of the age would find expression in ever more complex aesthetic forms. Seen in that light, the spectacular intricacy of Conrad's work is unimaginable without his participation in the destructive energies of imperialism. It's possible that Achebe and Said understand this better than any Western reader ever could. But great work galls us, drives us into folly; the fervor of our response to it is a form of tribute. Despite his "errors," Conrad will never be dropped from the reading lists. Achebe's and Said's anguish only confirms his centrality to the modern age.



At the end of the second class, Henry spoke at length of Kurtz's progression toward death and Marlow's "privilege of watching this self encounter itself," and Alex was silent, perhaps humbled. My antagonism toward him eased. I had not much liked myself as a young man, I remembered. Alex had resisted the class consensus, which took some courage, or stubbornness, and if he thought he was absolved of "darkness" he had plenty of time to discover otherwise. In Shapiro's class, liberal humanism had resisted and survived, though the experience had left us all a little shaken. It was hard these days, as Shapiro noted, to find yourself.

"I don't want to say that this is a work that teaches desperation, or that evil is something we can't deal with," Shapiro said. "In some ways, the world we live in is not as dark as Conrad's; in some ways, it is darker. This is not a one-way slide to the apocalypse that we are witnessing. We ourselves have the ability now to recognize, and even to fix and change our society, just as literature reflects, embodies, and serves as an agent of change."

The students were relieved. They wanted reconciliation and peace. And one of them, it seems, had, like Marlow, discovered what he was looking for. He had "found" himself. "We scream at the wilderness, and the wilderness screams back," Henry said, concluding his presentation with a flourish. "There's a tension, and at that point of tension we resolve our nature." ♦

PORTFOLIO

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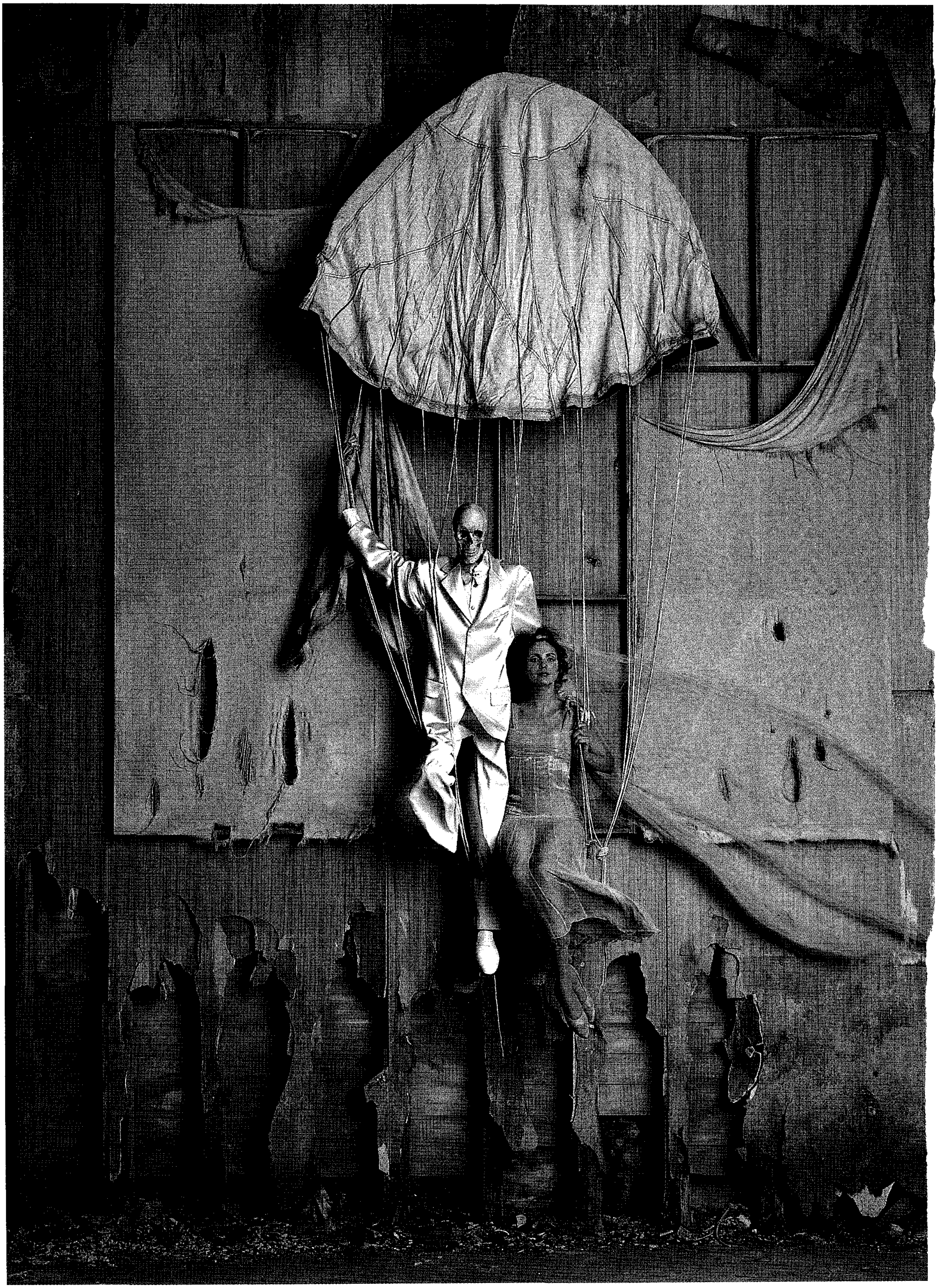
BY RICHARD AVEDON



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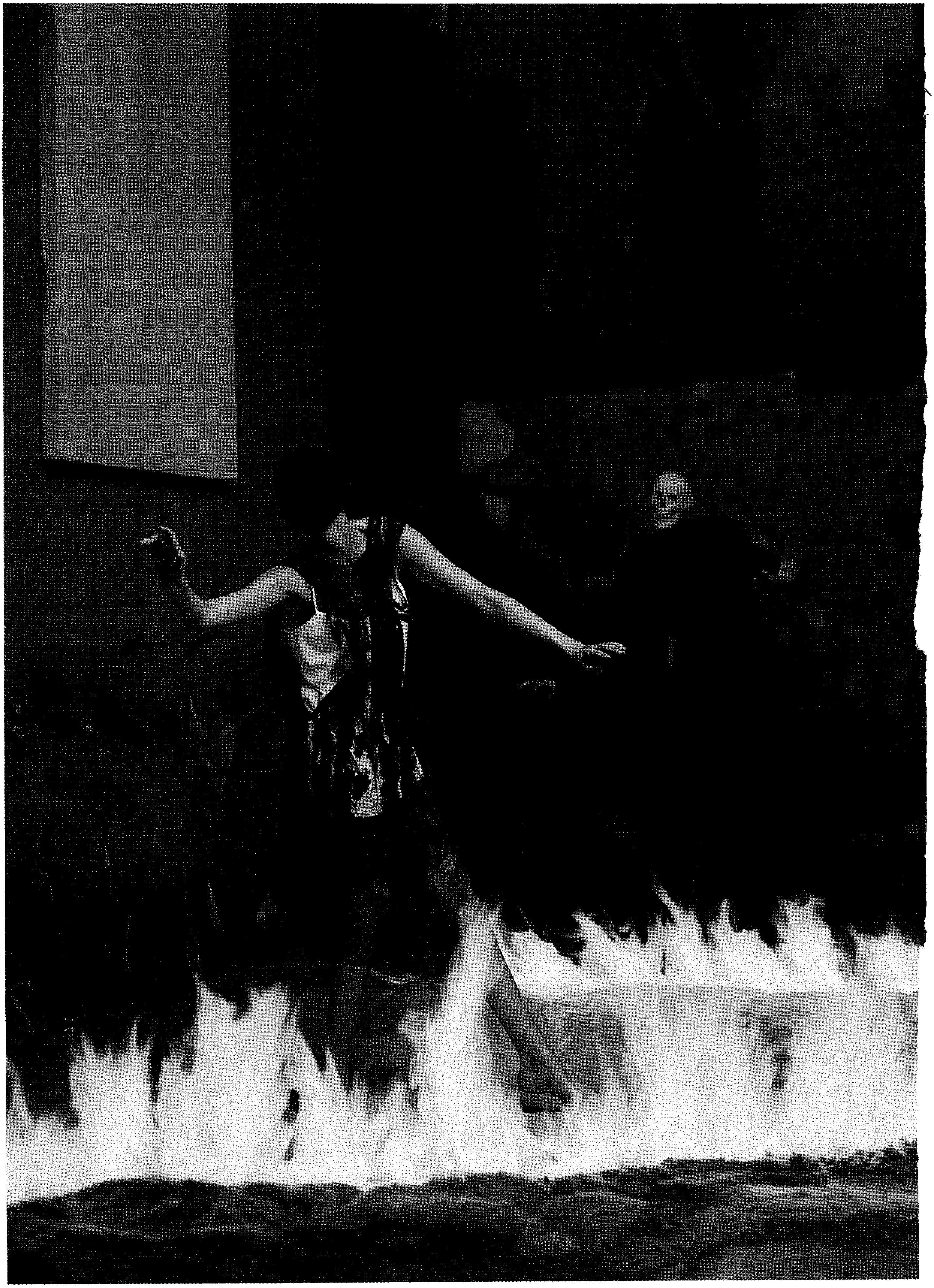

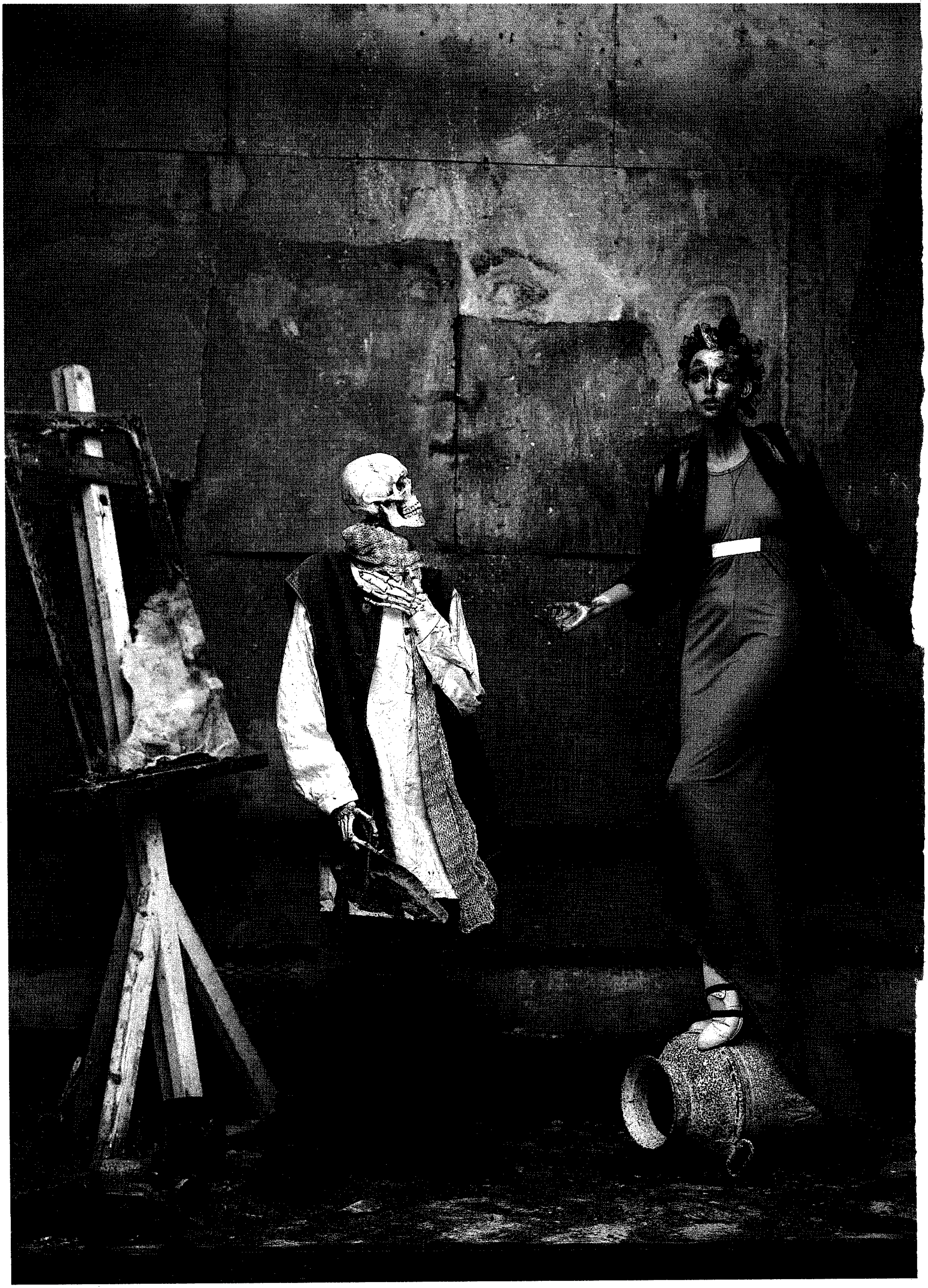

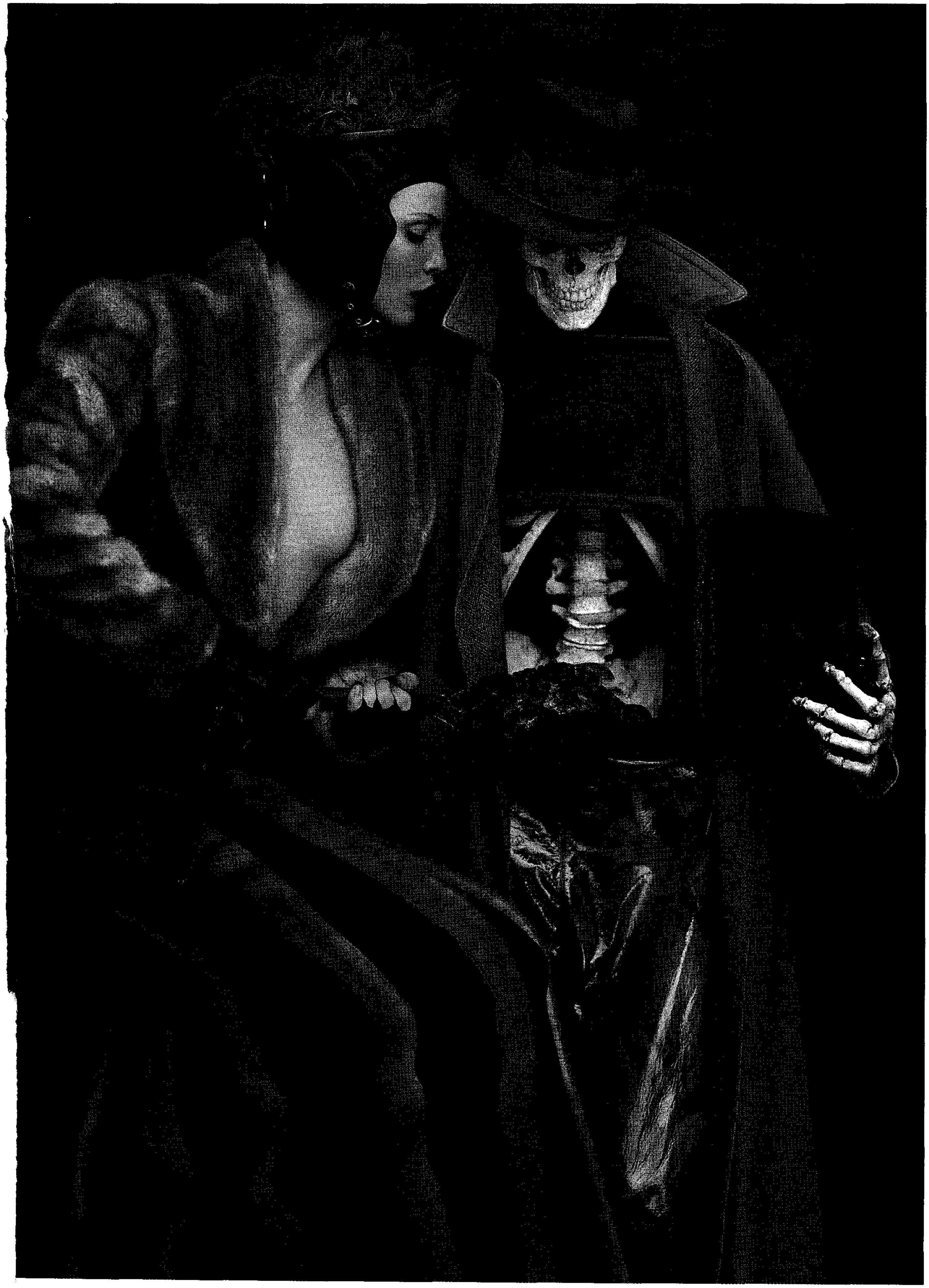

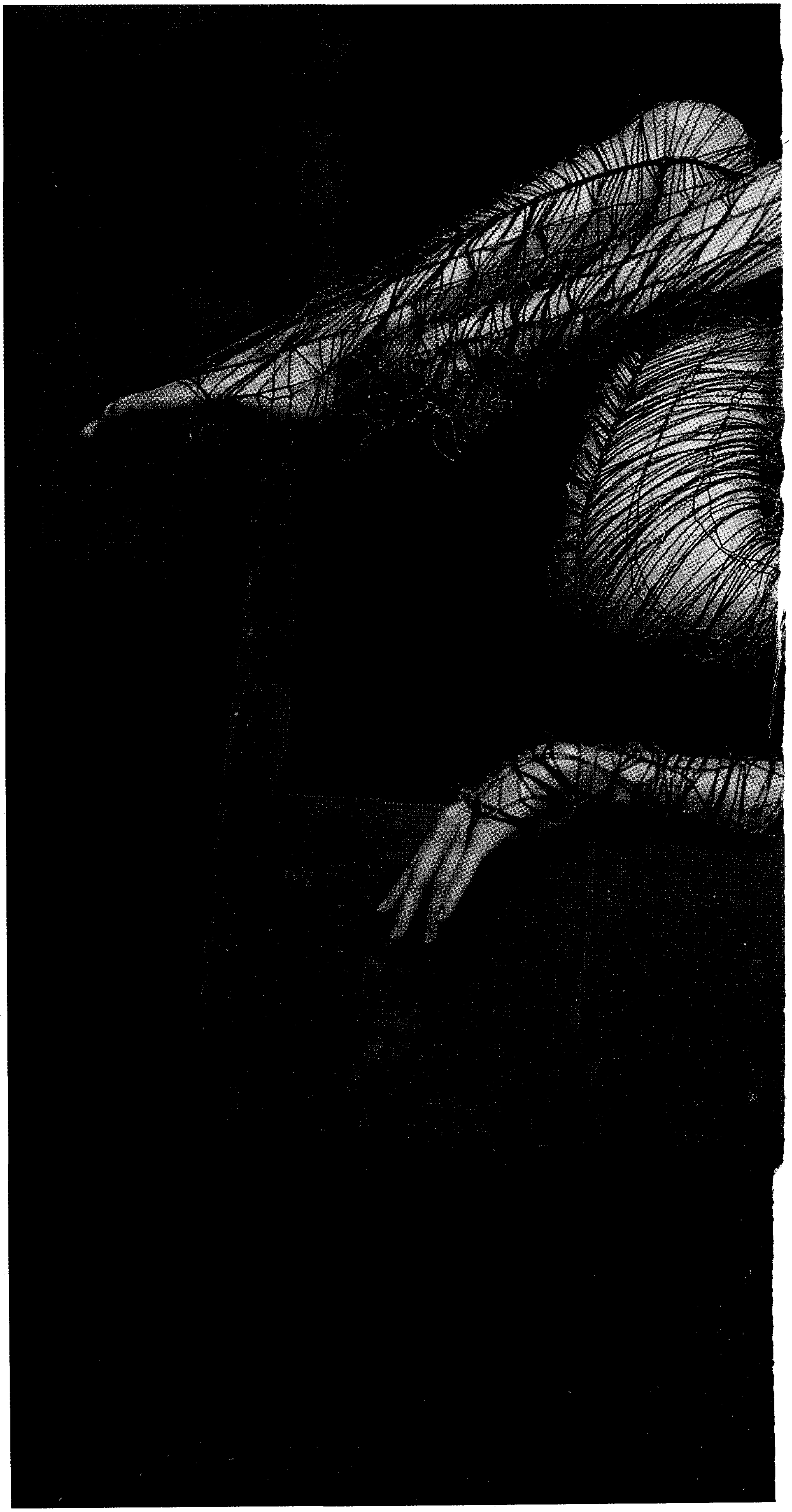

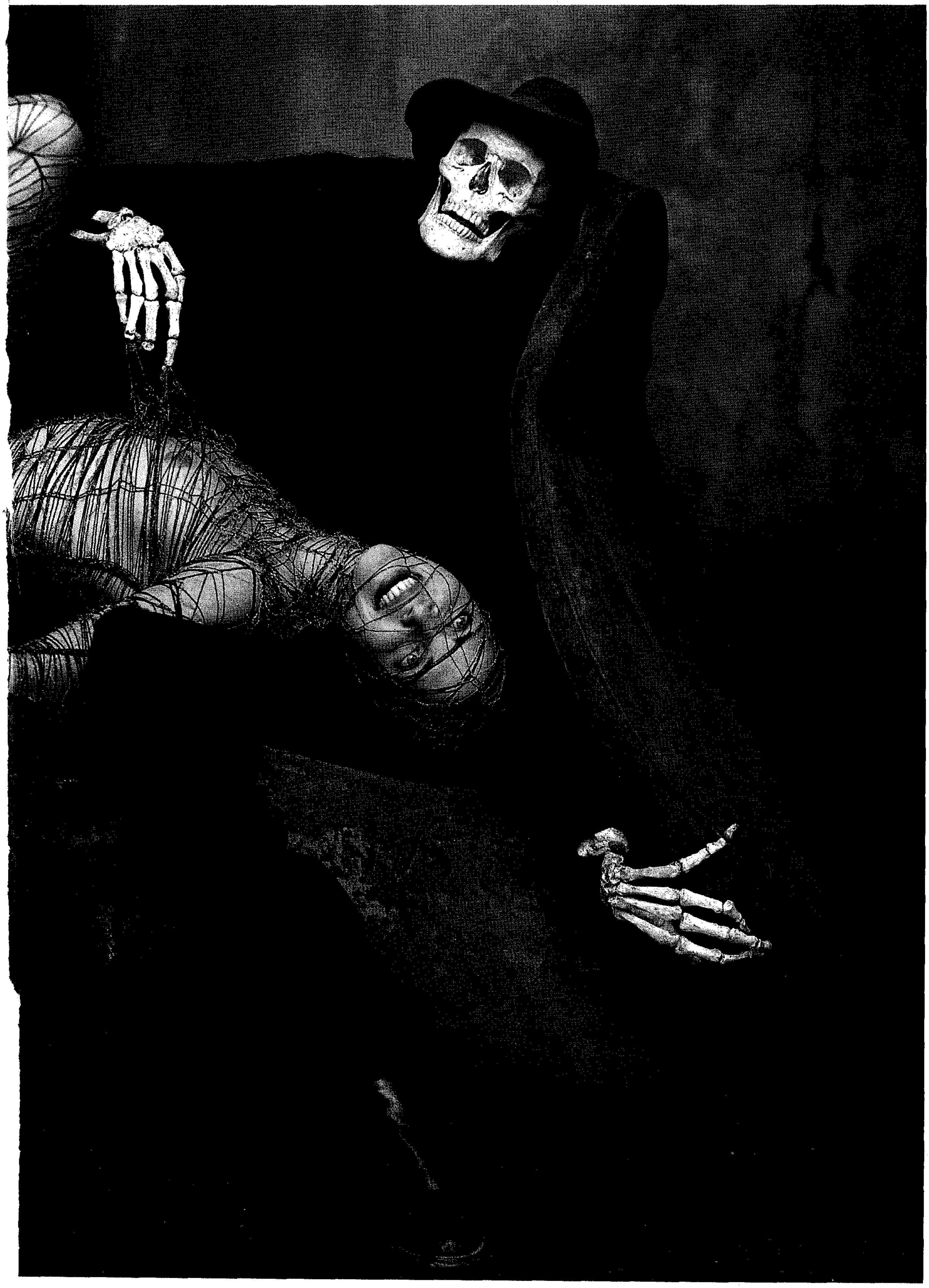

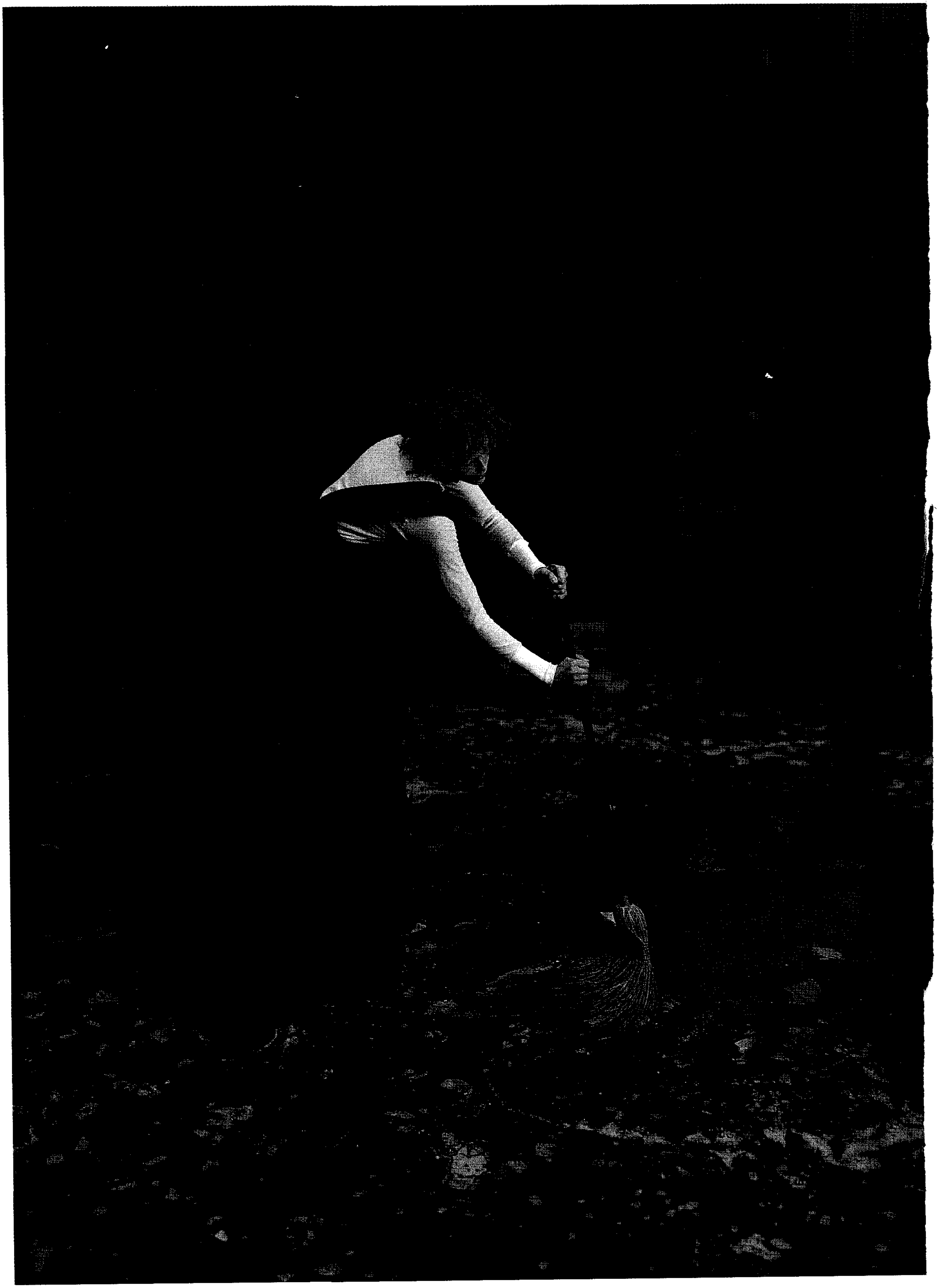

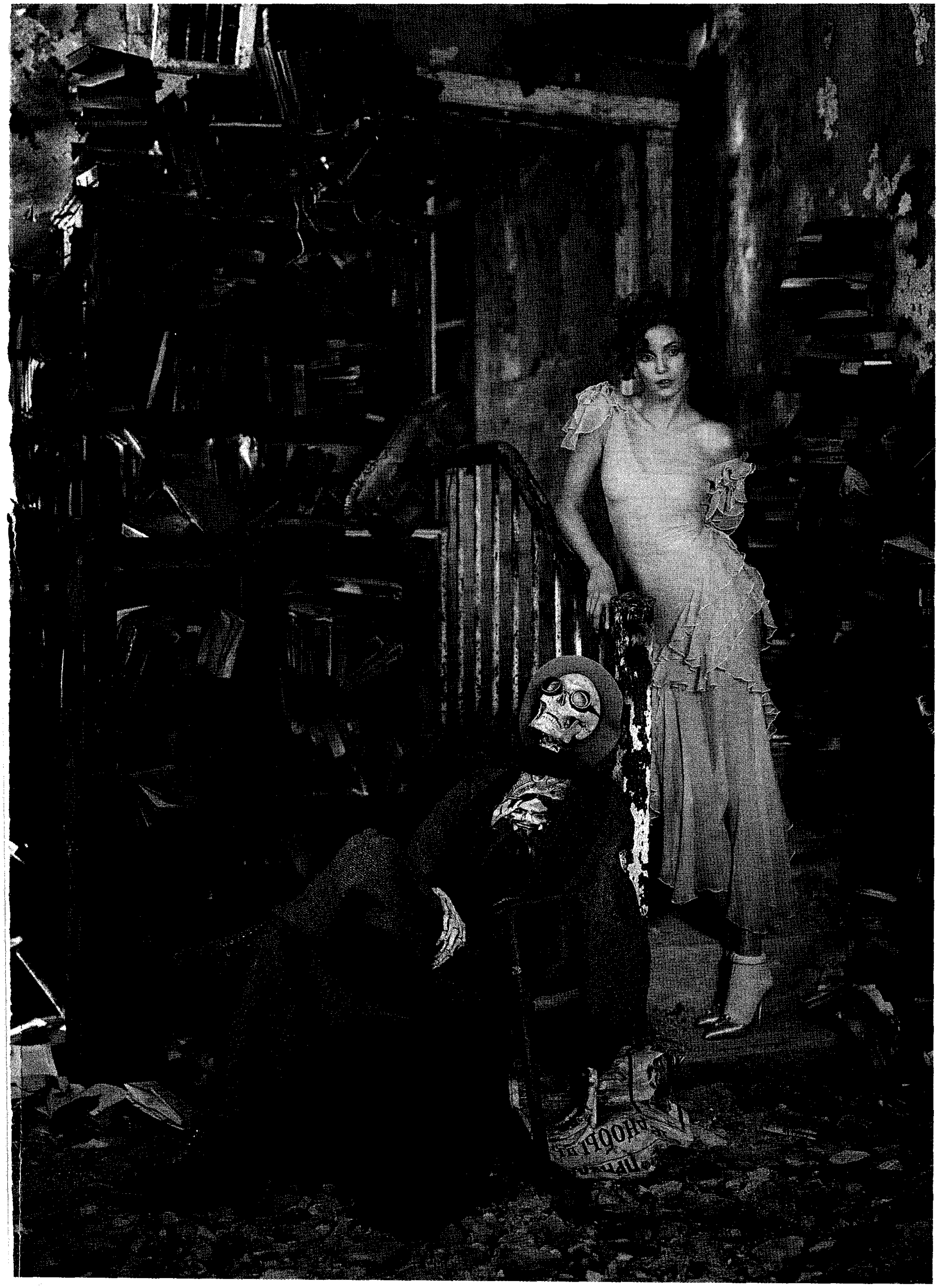

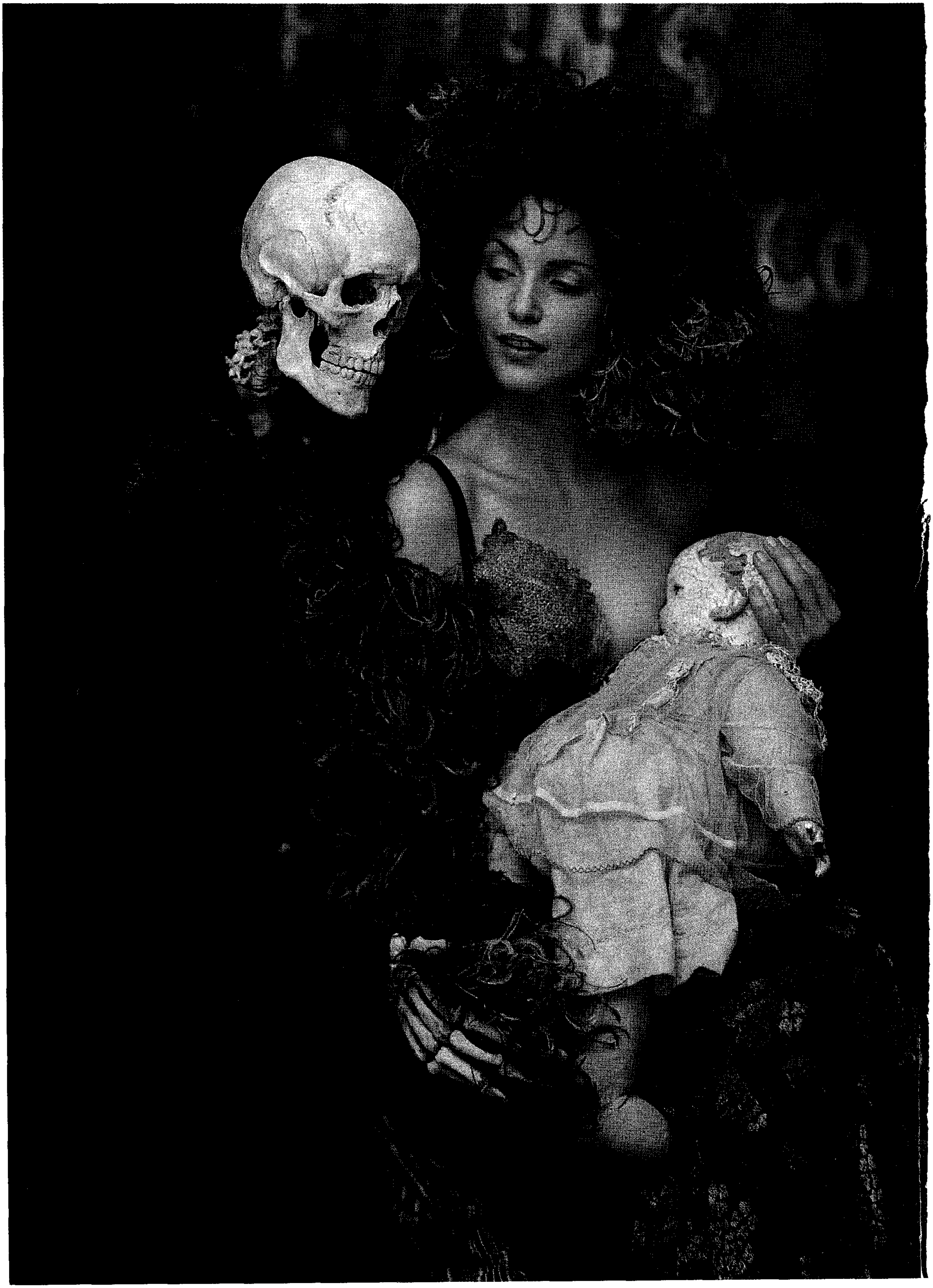

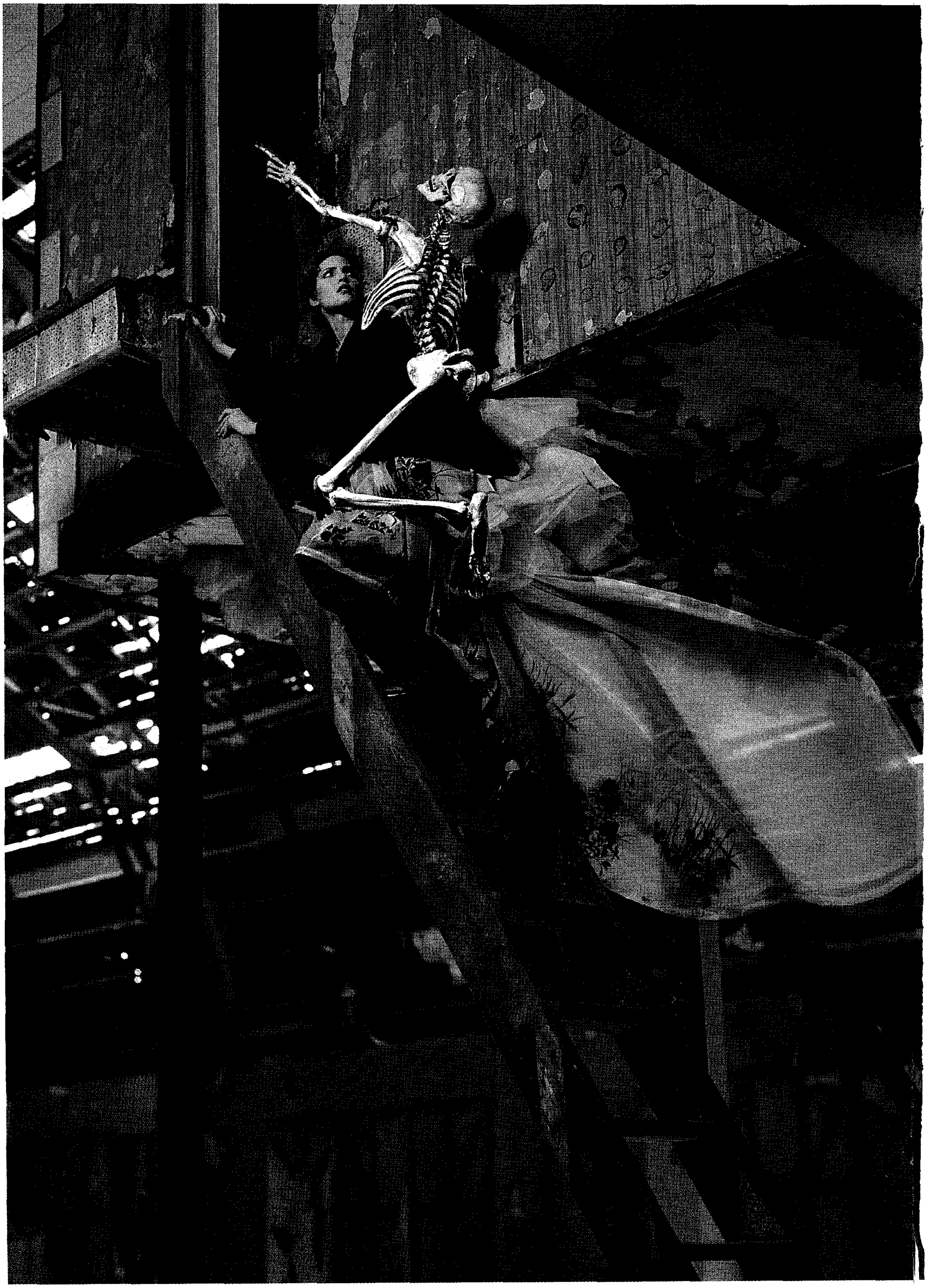

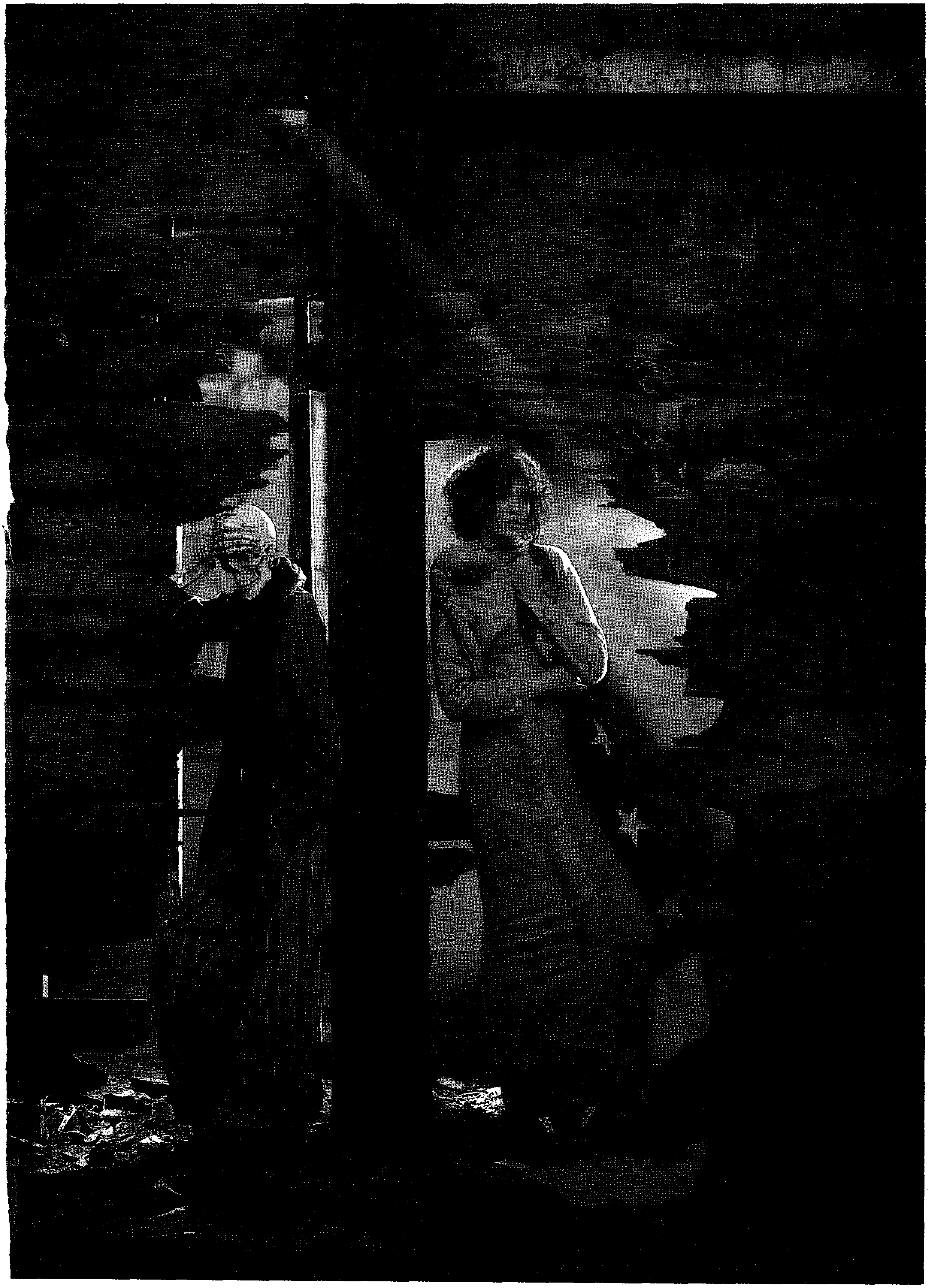

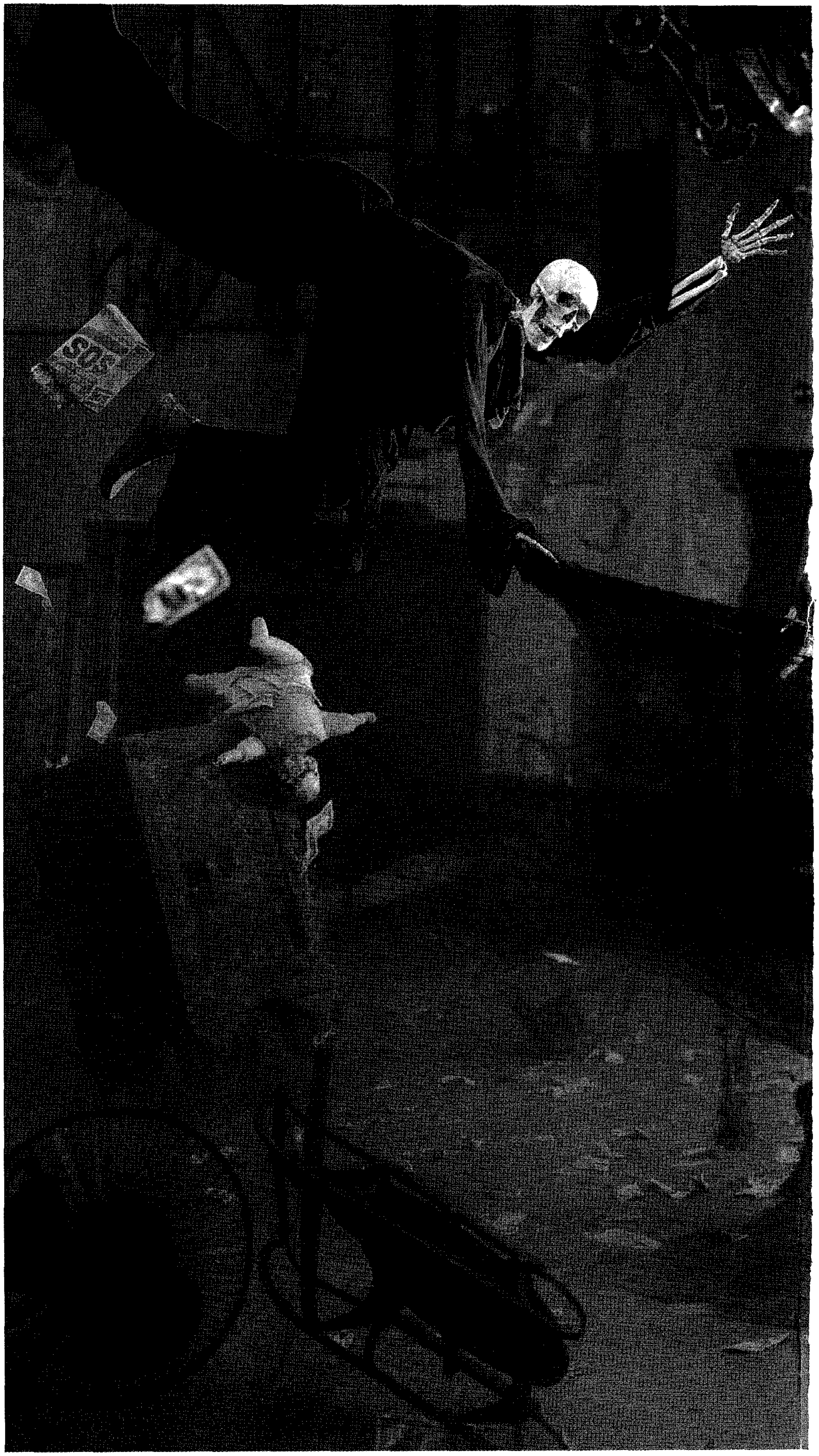
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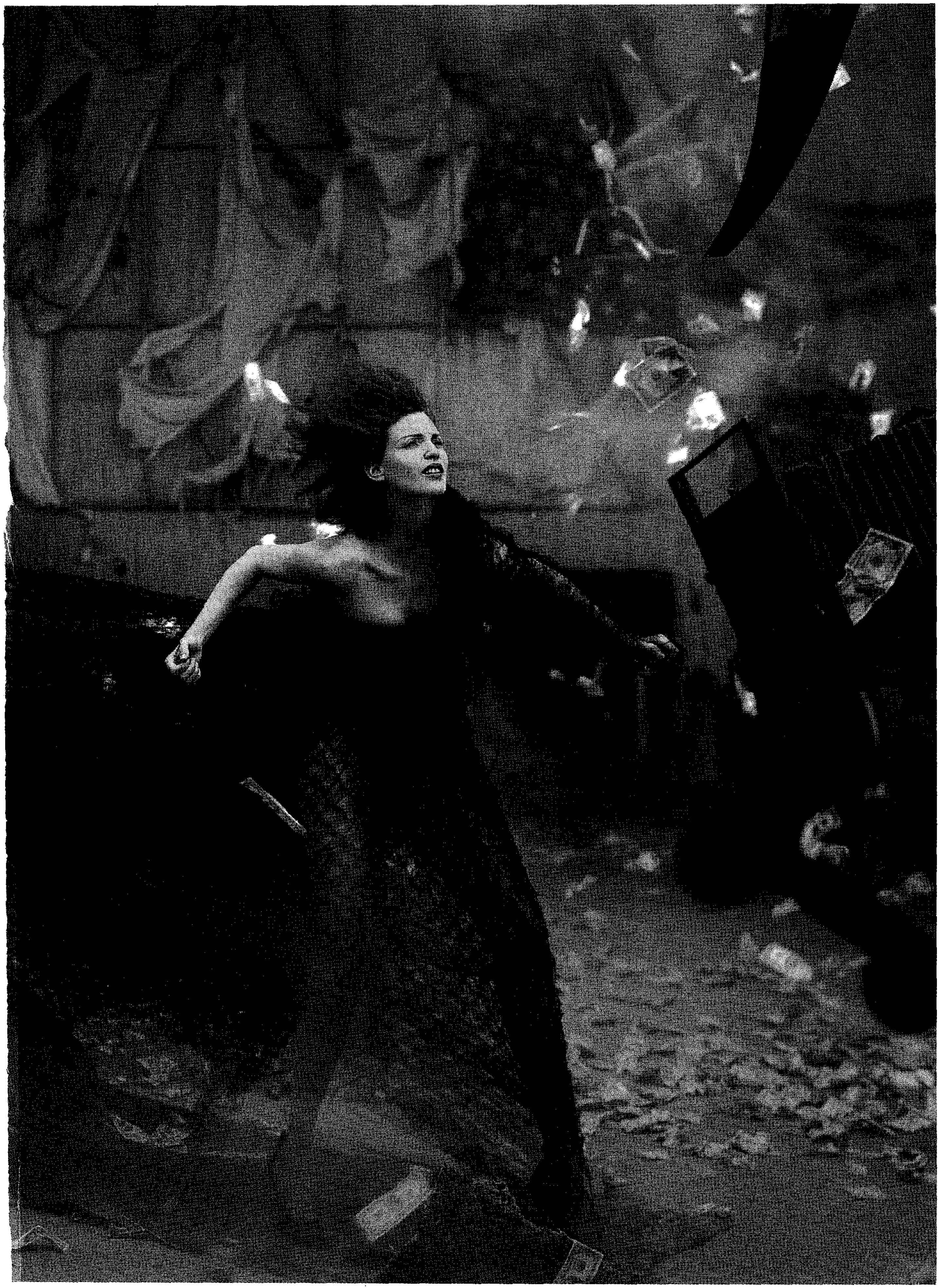
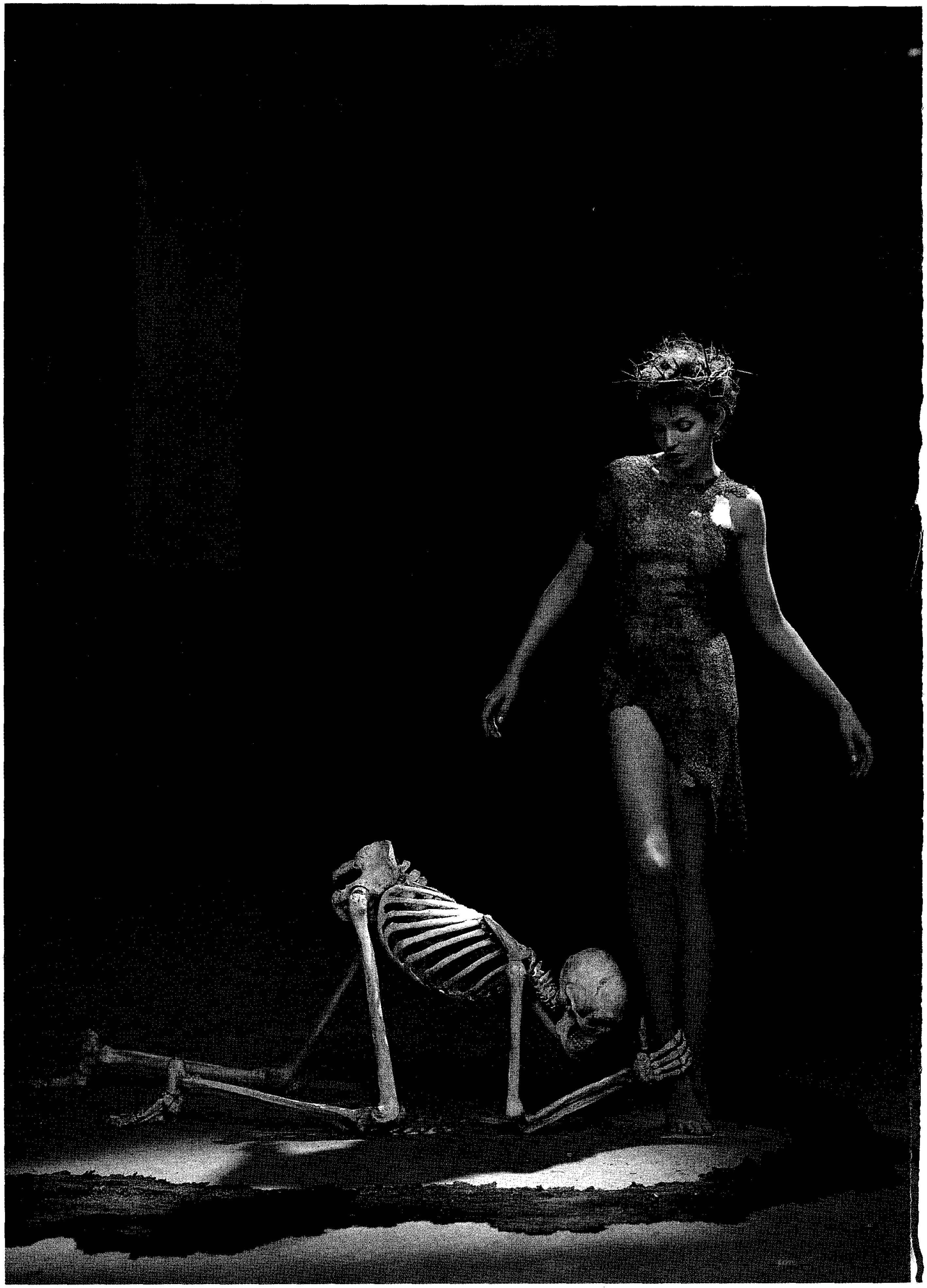
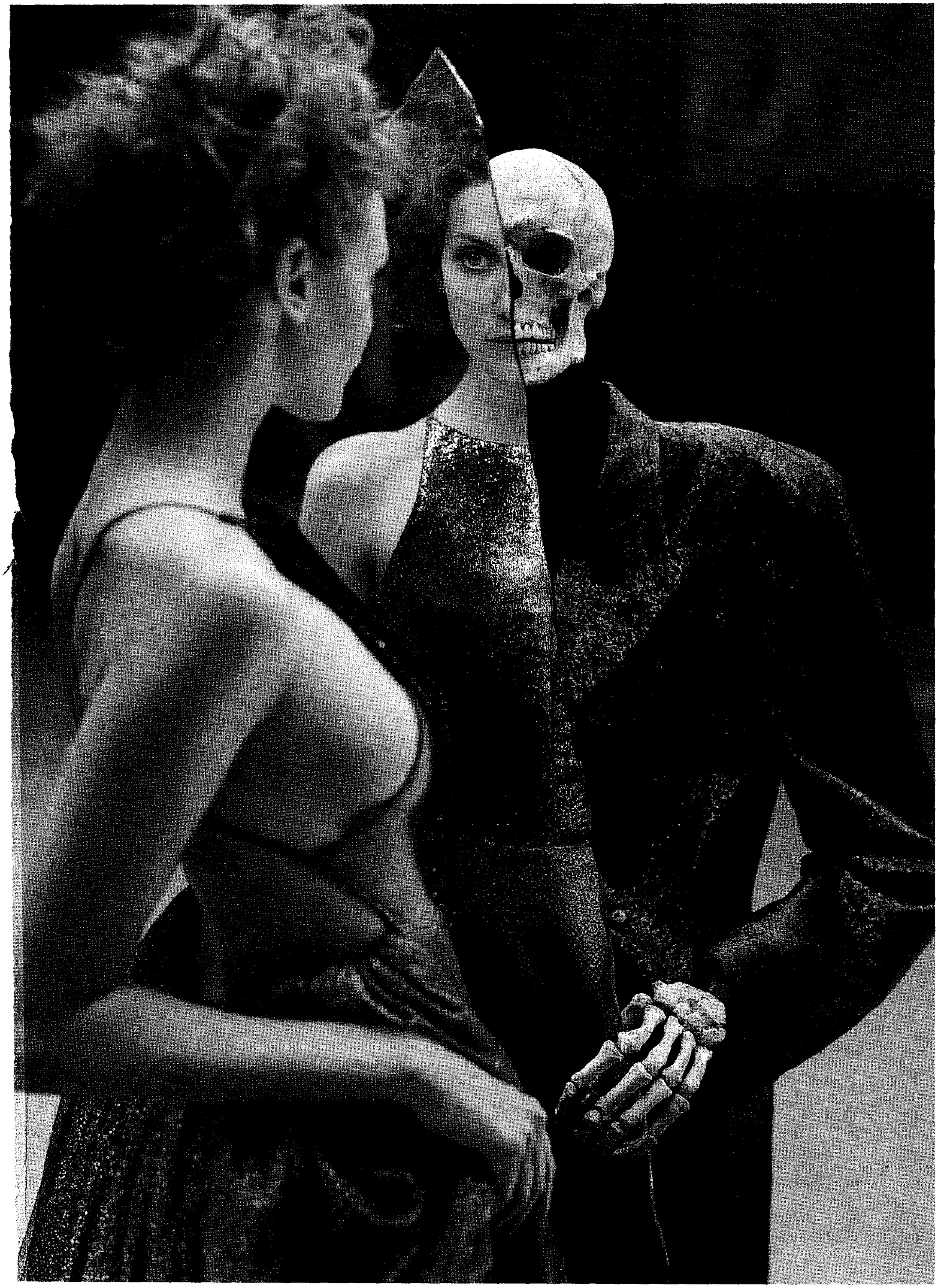
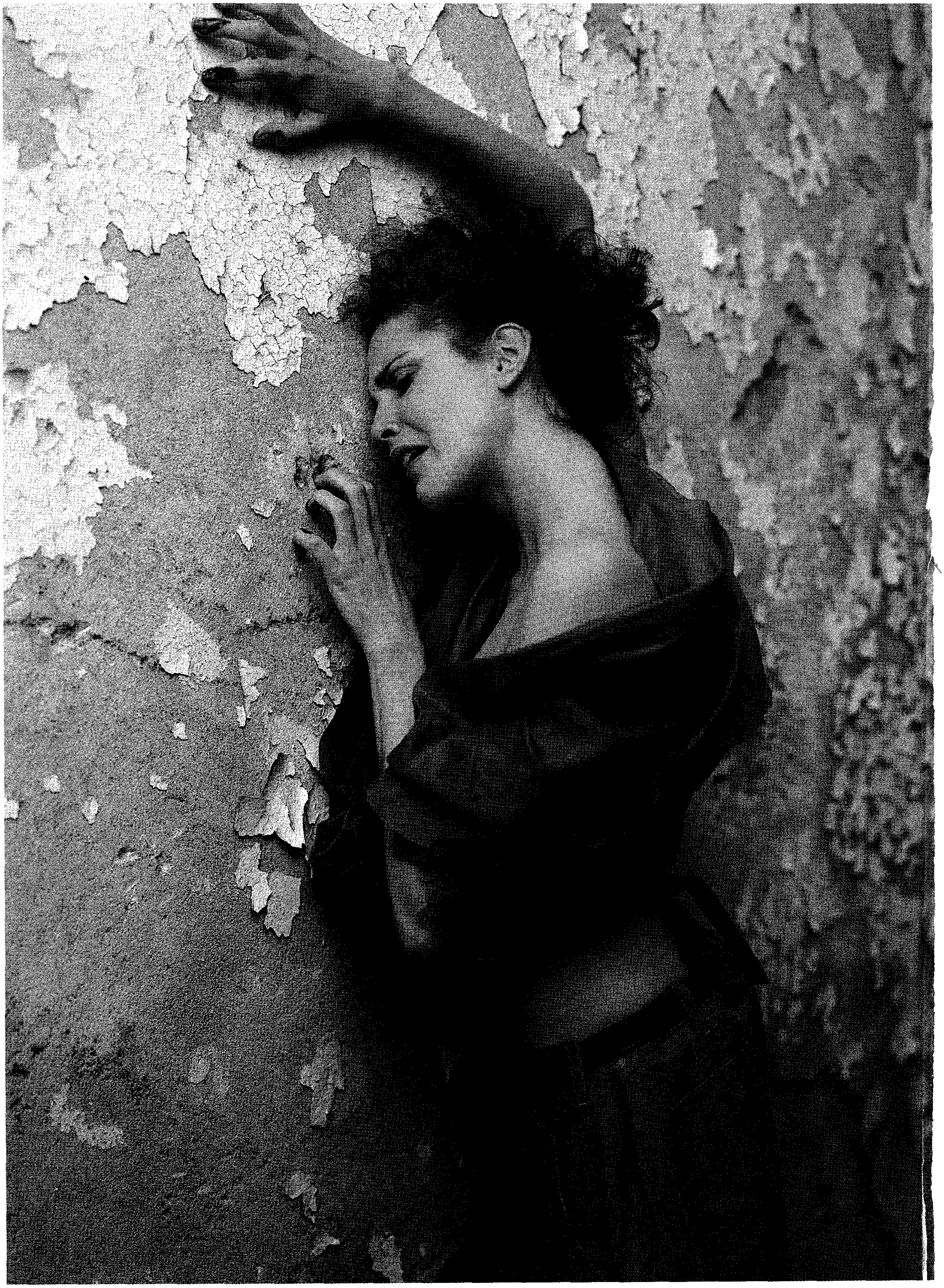
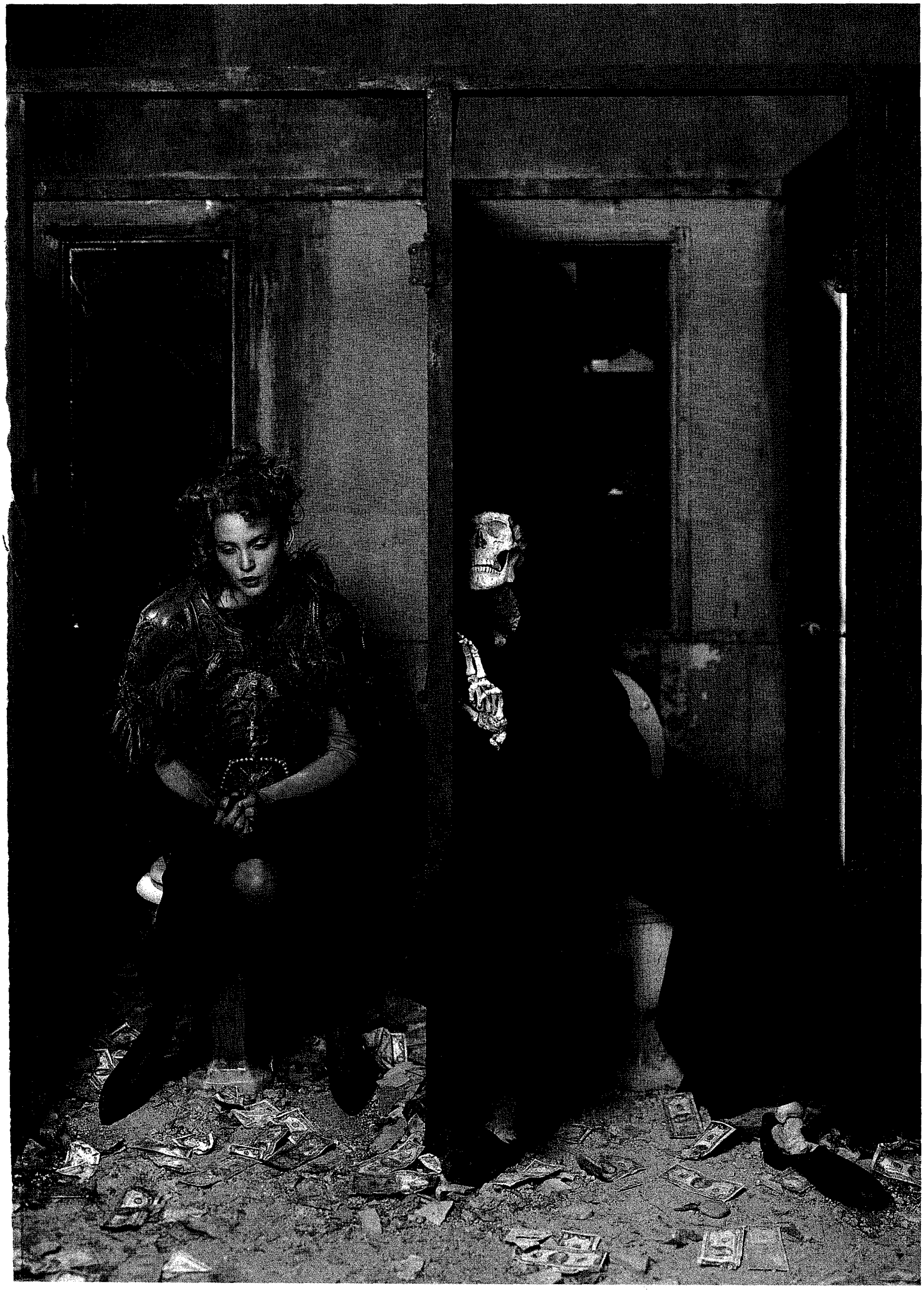
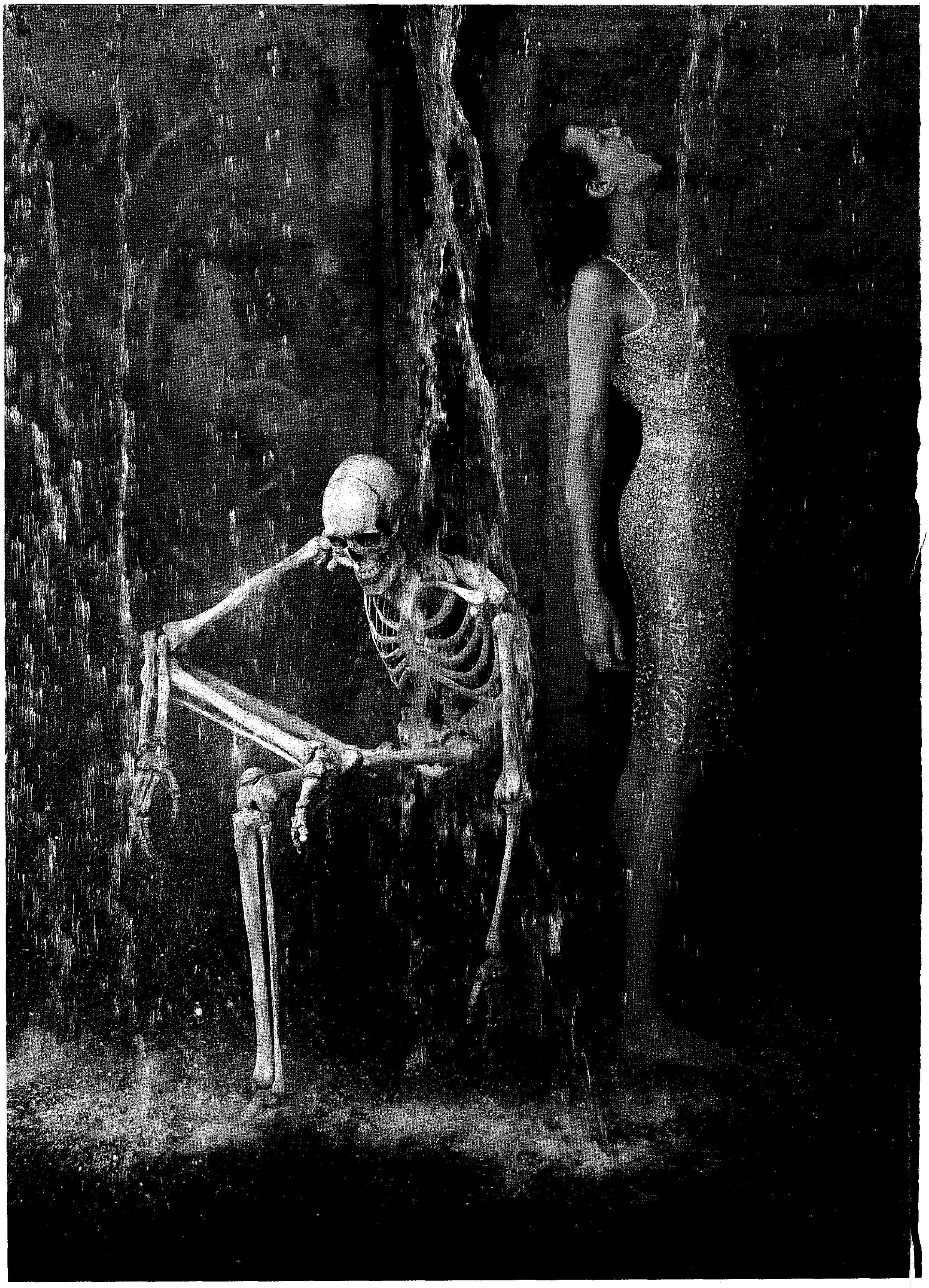


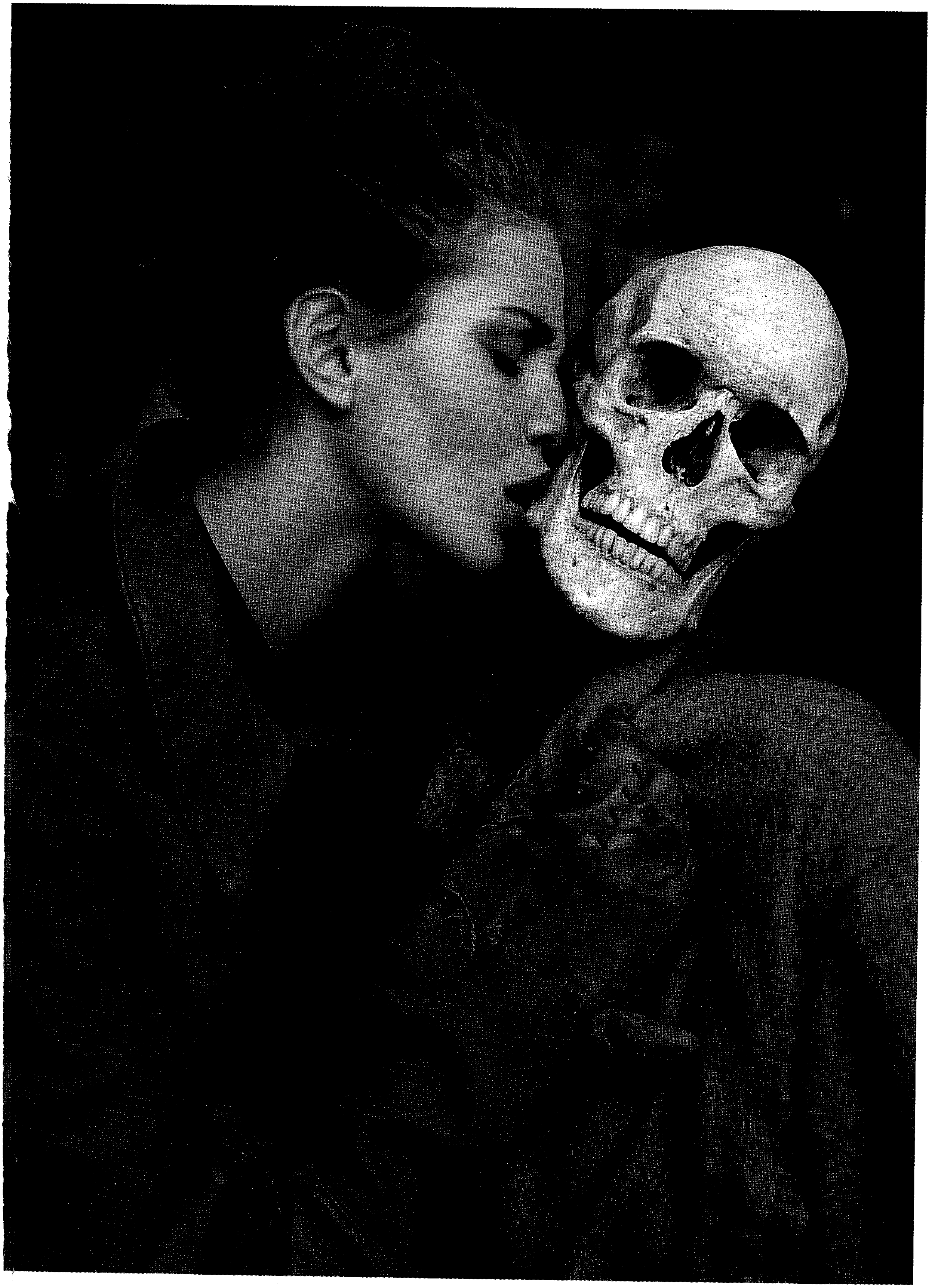


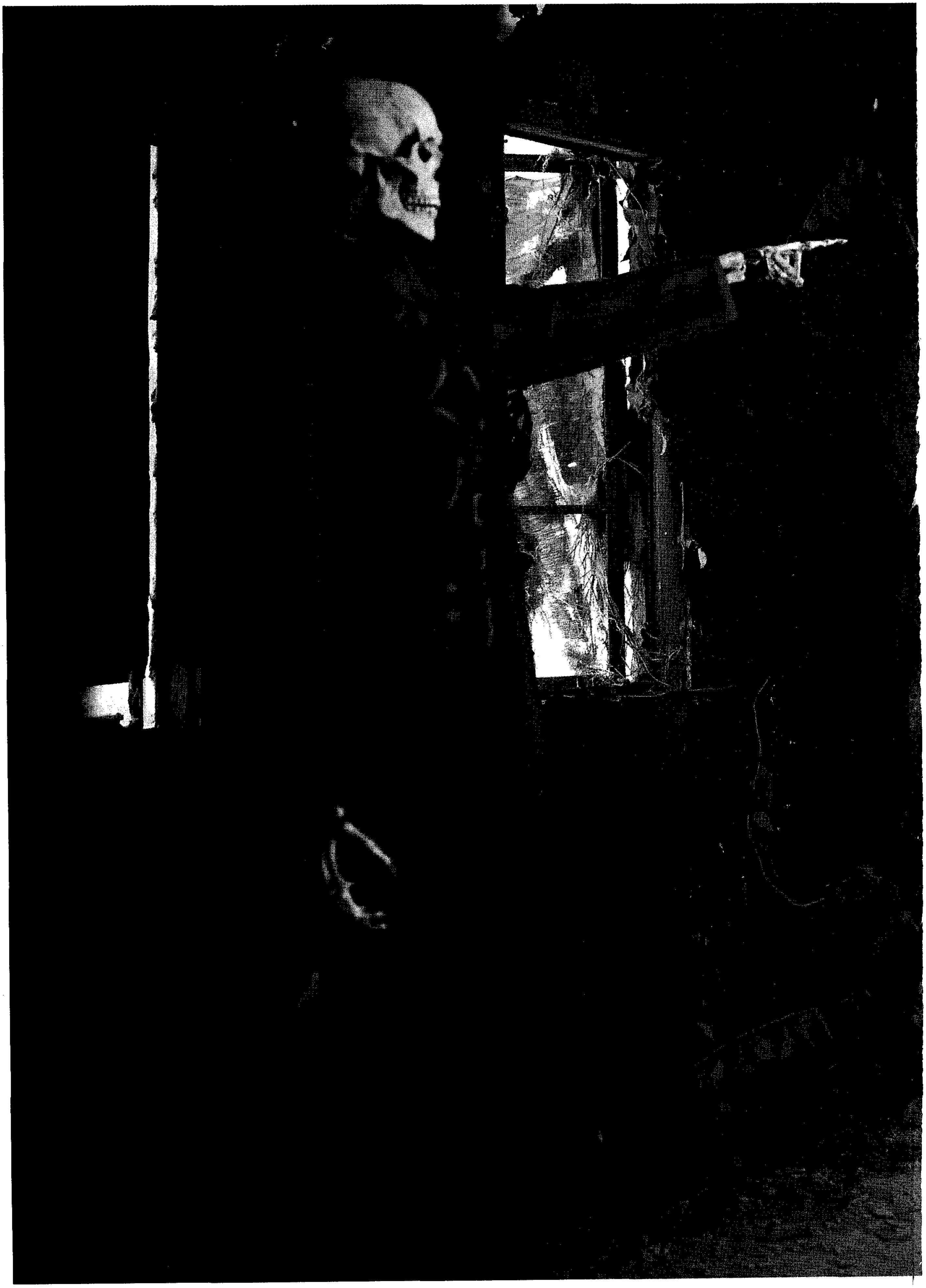










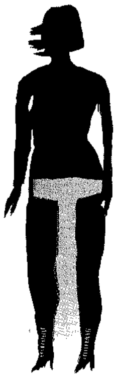


Credits for the Portfolio are on page 183.

FICTION

TURGOR

BY MARY GAITSKILL



TODAY the clerk in the fancy deli next door asked me how I was, and I said, "I have deep longings that will never be satisfied." I go in there all the time, so I thought it was O.K. But she frowned slightly and said, "Is it the winter that does it to you?" and I said, "No, it's just my personality." She laughed.

It's the kind of thing that I enjoy saying at the moment but that has a nasty reverb. I want it to be a joke, but I'm afraid it's not.

Last week a woman I have not spoken to for years called me to tell me that someone I used to have sex with had died of a drug overdose. I was shocked to hear it, but not especially sorry. He'd had a certain fey glamour and a knack for erotic chaos which was both exhilarating and horrible, but he was essentially an absurdly cruel, absurdly unhappy person, and I thought that, in the end, he was probably quite relieved to go. I had not seen him in ten years, and our association had been pornographic, loveless, and stupid. We had had certain bright moments of camaraderie and hijinks, but none of it justified the feelings I'd had for him. Even now, he occasionally appears in my dreams—loving and tender, smiling as he hands me, variously, a candy bar, a brightly striped glass ball, a strawberry-scented candle. In one dream he grew wings and flew to South America with me clinging to his back, ribbons flying from our hair and feet.

"I know he hurt you," my friend said. "But I think he hurt himself a lot more."

"Yeah," I said. "He did."

When I got off the phone, I sat still for some moments. Then I got up and dressed for the party I was about to attend. It was a birthday party for an acquaintance, a self-described pro-sex feminist who had created a public niche for herself as a pornographer and talk-show guest. I put on a see-through blouse, a black bra, a tiny black skirt, high-heeled boots, and a ratty black wig I had found in the bargain bin of a used-clothing store.

I took a taxi to the party, and the driver, whom I had engaged in conversation, commented on my clothes. "I just wondered," he said, "why you're dressed so . . . well, so . . . I mean . . . "

"You mean like a slut?"

"Uh, yeah." He glanced in his rearview. "Not that I'm saying anything."

"It's O.K.," I said. "It's because I think it's fun. It's not a big scary sex thing. It's an enthusiastic, participatory kind of thing. Besides, I'm thirty-nine, and pretty soon I won't be able to do it anymore, because I'll be an old bag."

He nodded thoughtfully. "Well, that's cool," he said. "It's just that you don't seem like the type who needs the attention."

His comment was so touching that it made me feel maudlin, and feeling maudlin made me feel belligerent. "A guy I used to be involved with used to criticize me for not dressing slutty enough," I said. "He said I wasn't much of a girl. He'd probably like what I've got on, but the little prick is dead now." I dug around in my bag for the fare. The driver's eyes flashed urgently in his rearview.

AT the party, I quickly found the bar; I was working on getting drunk when I noticed that a pretty, snooty-looking boy was staring at me, his large eyes glowing with cheap, carnivorous ardor. I found that pleasing, especially coming from someone who looked at least ten years younger than I, but there was also something a little unnerving about it. It wasn't exactly lust; it was a look of stunted idealism, a shallow romanticism that could only be disappointed at—even appalled by—the substance that lurks under any fancy façade, including mine.

"You look like a movie star," he said.

I mumbled abashedly.

"How did you get your look?"

"It's just a wig." Perplexed and embarrassed to think he might be making fun of me, I looked at the gift table, upon which guests had impishly heaped dildos, vibrators, carrots, daikons, and cucumbers. "My," I said, "look at that preponderance of elongated objects."

"*What*?"

He looked at me askance; I immediately launched a meaningless exchange of questions and answers: "Where are you from?" "How long did you live there?" "Do you like it in San Francisco?"

"What is this, an interview?" he snapped.

"I was hoping it was an exchange of friendly noises," I said.

"I'm going to get a drink," he said. "I'm going to get a drink now." He turned on his haughty heel. Already the substance had squished out and repelled him! Oh, well. I circulated, working hard on my drunken stupor. I was sitting with a jovial group of women when he approached me again. He had one of the impish daikons in his hand; he sat down and rapped the vegetable on the table and said, "I've got a point to make here."

I gazed into space and murmured, "I hear you."

After that we communicated more smoothly. We chatted about rock stars, haircuts, hair dye, and whether or not there is such a thing as national character. His name was Frederick. He said he had come to this party because his friend Al had given the birthday girl a guitar, and he wanted Frederick, who was a musician, to show her how to play it. "He begged me to come," said Frederick. "He even offered to *pay* me." He sighed as if this were a distasteful burden. We decided to share a cab home.

In the cab he sat very close to me, and that artificial closeness made me sense acutely how alone I would feel when I said good night and entered the long, dark hallway of my apartment. I interrupted our banal conversation by taking his hand; I was surprised when he gave me some sweet, gentle pressure.

"Frederick," I said. "Would you like to come in for a minute?"

"Sure," he said. "But I won't stay for long."

I said "O.K." very softly.

I OFFERED him something to drink, but I only had rum and a few ounces of Jagermeister. We sat on the floor and shared the ounces.

FILIP PAGOWSKI

"This is really weird," I said. "I haven't had anybody in my apartment like this for over a year." He looked skeptical. My cat came into the room. I told him I'd had her for ten years. I said I was concerned about her weight because I'd recently taken in and tamed a feral kitten, who was probably hiding under the bed, and that since kittens need to eat a lot I was compelled to overfeed the cat so she wouldn't feel neglected.

"She isn't fat," Frederick said. "I think she's pretty."

Maybe he was nice after all. I raised one of my booted feet and coquettishly poked my pointed heel into his stomach. His face underwent a funny shift of expression. He kissed me. We lay on the floor, and I mauled him, pausing to gently touch my nose against his face, neck, and slight chest. He told me he was twenty-six. I told him I was thirty-nine. I said I hoped that my age didn't bother him. I said that sometimes it bothered me, and that other times I looked forward to old-bagness, when I could stop worrying about sex and be like a kid again. I sat on him and lightly bounced. He said he thought I was a very interesting person and that he would like to see me in another context; he asked if I thought I'd like to "hang out" with someone so much younger. "I don't know," I said. "I might feel self-conscious, and, besides, we might not like each other." I bent and kissed him again, cupping his head the way I would hold a baby's head to keep it from falling. "Before we left the party, Darleen told me something about you," I said. "She said you were really good, but that you wouldn't call me the next day or the day after that or the day after that."

"And that was all right with you?"

"Yeah," I said. "It was."

He stared at me.

We rolled around some more. He felt very different from the way he talked. He felt fragile and tentative, but with a muscular hot streak running up his center. He vacillated between full presence and no presence at all; his present moments were animal and nervous, his absence was like a snake that you can feel, but not see, moving past you. He made me feel submissive and high-handed at the same time. "Man," I said, "you are so sweet."

In response, he kissed me, and then pulled back so that my mouth was left open; he moved in again as if he were going to kiss me, and then, when I responded, pulled away again. Through slit eyes I noted his smirk. I recalled that my last boyfriend, who was also in his twenties, had told me that he sometimes liked to pull out of a kiss so that the girl's tongue would be sticking out and looking funny. Fondly and fairly hard, I bit Frederick's lips. He sat up and, out of nowhere, began to talk mean shit about a girl who had been at the party.

"She's nothing but a dog," he said. "She likes to be ordered around. Like, go into the corner, sit up, stay, wait, beg."

"Yeah, well, there's a lot of that going around," I said. I paused, looking up at him. "How do you know that about her?" I asked. "Did you screw her?"

His smirk wobbled uncertainly. "Uh, no. But that's what all her performances are about. Didn't you notice those pictures of her on the wall tonight? With the whips?"

"No. I'm surprised. I would've thought emotional pain was more her thing." I took him by his shoulders and put him on his back again. I wondered if he had brought up this girl's dogness in order to indirectly implicate me in it. I felt hurt for a second and then decided that I didn't care; it seemed the evening could sustain some dog influence. "Actually, I don't know about this whole San Francisco S-M yoga-class crap," I said. "Like, watch me up onstage getting my butt whipped. I mean, it's so schematic or something." I lay on top of him and rubbed my lower lip gently against the grain of his left eyebrow. He stroked my back and my head. He found my lips with his hand and insinuated his finger into my mouth.

I sat up and straddled him. "People are fucking crazy," I said. "This girl I know once had a thing with this guy through E-mail. Finally they met, and she went home with him. He made out with her and did all kinds of stuff, and then he just rolled over and went to sleep, except he had a big hard-on. The next night the same thing happened. After that she never heard from him. Then she ran into him and he called her a cunt."

His expression as I told this story became soft, even humane. He also looked as if I'd called him on something—which, perhaps, in some muddled way, I had. He put his hands on my hips and said, "I like you." He looked into the air with that strange, tender face. "But I'm not sure why."

"I like you, too," I said, reaching for his belt buckle. "And I know what you mean about not knowing why. Actually, you remind me of a real prick I used to be involved with about ten years ago—not that you're a prick or anything. He was weird in a lot of ways. He was the only man I've ever known who didn't like blow jobs."

"I don't like them much, either," Frederick said. "Because most girls aren't any good at them. Except the last girl—and I think that was a guy."

"What about if you're in love?" I asked.

"The love thing—that's different," he said. "That doesn't have anything to do with technique."

"For me it does. If I'm in love, I'm pretty much going to like what the person does. But I guess men are different." I was beginning to think he *might* be a prick, but his prickness seemed minor-key and strangely weightless; I didn't think he would hurt me. So I sucked his dick. When I stopped he said he liked my tongue. "It's a pointy little guy," I said. "Probably from constantly reaching out for, um, things."

"Really?" He looked mortified.

"Uh-huh." I ran one hand down his front, then his thigh. "You're so frail," I murmured. "But you have this nice masculine turgor thing happening, too."

"You keep using words I don't know."

"Oh, 'turgor'? I just learned that myself. It means the tension inside plants that gives them form. It's nice, don't you think?"

He sat up. "What do you do for a living?"

"I teach at Berkeley. I teach poetry." I imagined myself as I would be the next day—sitting at my kitchen table with a headache, reading my students' ghastly poems. I thought of my students with a sorrowful pang. I imagined them in my living room, watching me as I lay with this too young person. "Look at me," I would say. "This is what I'm really like. I have nothing for you. I'm sorry." The hell of it was, if such a scene could actually take place, my students would only see it as evidence of my thrilling humanity; it would quite possibly raise me higher in their esteem.

WE kissed and rolled some more. My excitement was feverish and needy, but that didn't make me feel

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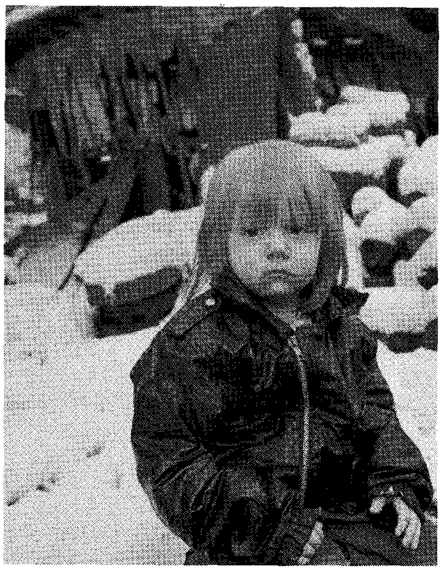

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afraid. I felt as if I could bat my excitement back and forth or turn it up and down, and I was delighted to roll and root in the fun of being pulled in so many directions. I felt as if I could have a small, good experience with this boy, and at that moment a small, good experience was more important than anything.

Then he called the direction. "I'm going to go," he said.

"Please don't," I said.

He kissed me, and I felt a deep, squalid bitterness under the first layer of his kiss. For the first time that night, I felt him in earnest, and he felt very familiar. We were now going in the direction broadly labelled "pain." But, of course, pain has many directions, too.

I went to the bathroom, and when I came back he was sitting on the couch with his pants on. He said again that he was going to go. I remembered that even pain can be tedious. I wondered if he'd gone through my wallet while I was peeing. I knelt and put my hand on his knee. "Please don't go," I said.

He came back down on the floor with me. He pushed at my wig with a soft, childish gesture. I took it off for him. My short brown hair had been badly mashed by the wig; it probably didn't look very good, but for some reason I didn't mind showing it to him.

"This suits you more," he said. "It's softer."

"Yeah, well, it's actual hair."

He got up on his knees and, putting his hand on top of my head, asked me to go down on him again. Probably he wanted me to get on my hands and knees, but, maybe out of irritation, I merely spread my legs and bent from the waist in a posture that was not very pleasing aesthetically or psychologically. It was also not very comfortable, so I stopped quickly and sat up. He hesitated and then, with a nervous toss of his head, pressed himself against me with velvety feline interest. I lay down. He lay on top of me. He reached under my skirt, worked his hand down my panty hose and lightly stroked my genitals with the back of his hand. The contempt in the gesture was rich and sensual, and I leaned into it. The numb comfort of humiliation tempted me; I gave him a little mew of encouragement. He answered me with a little mew of his own. He slid his hands under my head and gripped handfuls of my hair and

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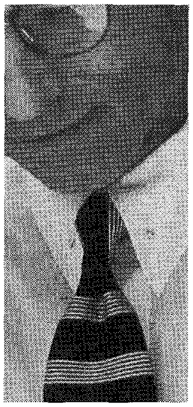

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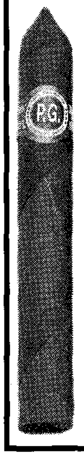

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pulled it. Carefully, he placed his prick against my genitals; he rubbed it slowly against me.

"Frederick?"

"What?" His thin voice swelled with greed.

"Would you please fuck me?"

"Oh, all right." He went for his belt buckle with an alacrity that belied his words.

I sat up quickly. "No," I said. "Never mind."

He sat up. We sat there. He blinked several times.

"I guess you want to go," I said.

He sat on the couch and crossed his legs. "It's not that I'm not attracted to you," he said. "I mean, if we had sex, it would probably be really good. But it wouldn't be right."

I was acutely aware of my body, as I might be if I had been knocked on the floor in the middle of a dance movement: first my wind came back, then I made sure nothing was broken, then I was filled with tenderness for my body. I remembered the time my dead lover had beat me up. He had said something unkind to me, and though he often said such things, this time I took offense and slapped him in the face. He slapped me harder; I punched him in the stomach. He knocked me down, fell on me, and banged my head on the floor until I was almost unconscious. When it was over, I had the same feeling of returning to my body, with tenacious animal self-love.

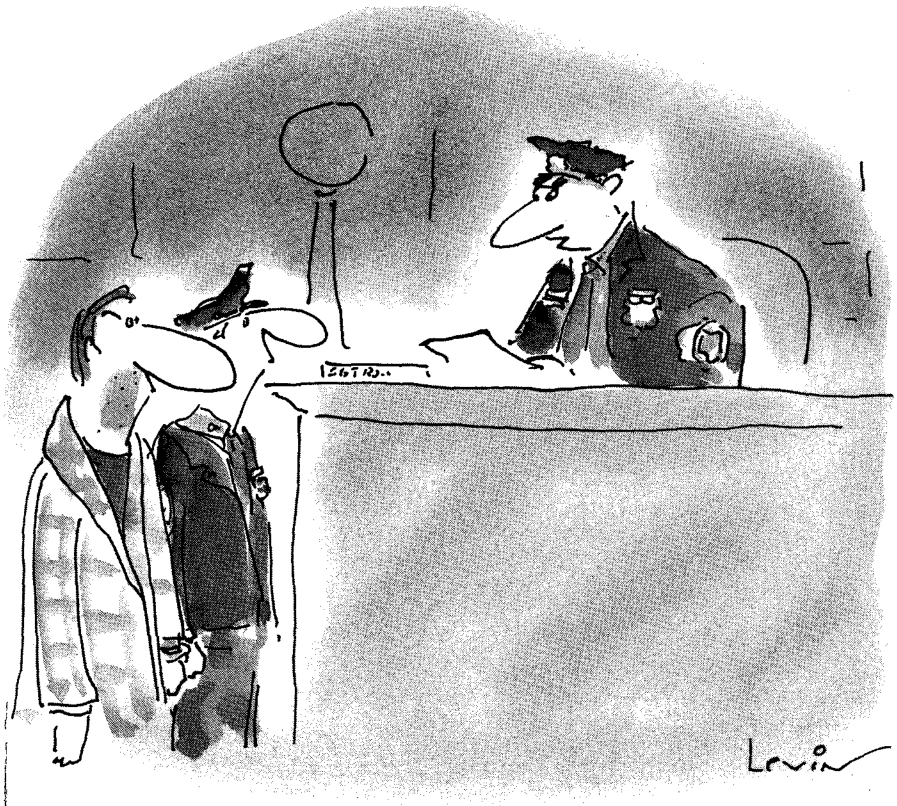
Meanwhile, Frederick was still talking. He said he was seeing a lot of women and that he was obsessed with his old girlfriend. He said that he needed "boundaries." "I'm too guarded to have sex right now," he said.

I thought of how he had pretended to kiss me and then pulled away. His words did not make sense to me, but many things don't make sense to me. "You're probably right," I said slowly. "We don't know each other, and it might be a bad experience. I've had a lot of bad experiences."

A look of indulgent emotionality came over his face, as if he were watching a sensitive movie about the special pain of a lonely older woman who's just been rejected by a younger guy. I felt a little surge of indignation that quickly devolved into pieces of uncertainty and vague good will. I was awfully tired. "Can you see what time it is?" I asked.

"It's five o'clock."

"Fuck!" I took his coat from the floor and wrapped it around my shoulders. "The last time I got involved with a guy



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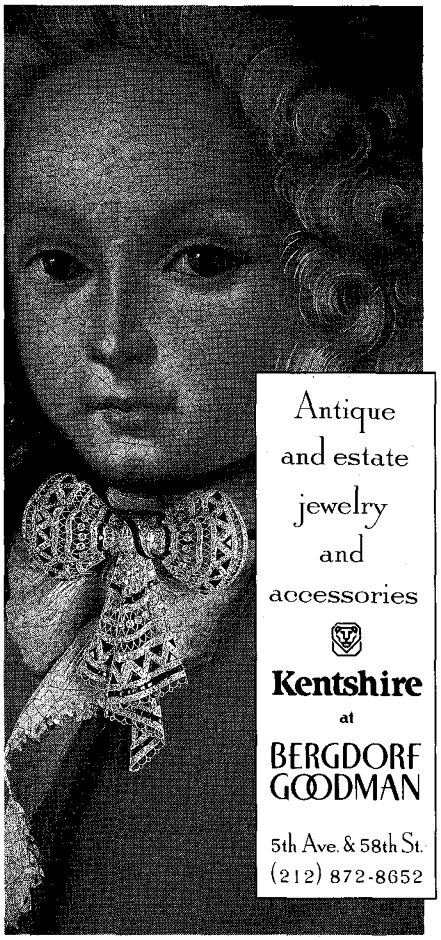

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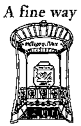

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we didn't have sex for three weeks, which naturally made me want him desperately. So when we finally did it, it felt like a cataclysm; I went into an emotional frenzy, and he got pulled right into it. Then the sex wore off, and there we were, stuck in all this bogus emotion. It seems like it doesn't work no matter what you do."

Mild surprise overtook his look of indulgent sympathy; his face was shadowed by mournful tenderness. It occurred to me that he might feel pain, too. We were both silent. Our silence comforted me. I held my hand out to him, and he took it in his.

"I'd like to see you again," he said.

"I don't think so," I said. "I mean, there's the old girlfriend and the other women and what have you. It sounds like a mess, and I'm pretty busy, actually. But I'm glad I met you. I think you're a nice person."

He almost flinched when I said that. His lips parted and his eyes became bleak and deep. He let go of my hand and stood up. I thought he was going to ask for his coat, but instead he went to my bookcase and withdrew a book. He looked at the cover and then turned it over. It was my only published book of poetry. I had published it ten years ago, won a few awards, and then collapsed. I'd published nothing since.

"Is this you?" he asked.

"Put that back," I said sharply.

He replaced it and stared at me with a look I couldn't read.

"I'm sorry," I said. "I didn't mean to be rude."

"It's O.K.," he said. "Sometimes when girls come to my place, they pick up stuff, and I don't like it. I say, 'Stop going through my things.' You just told me to stop going through your things." He looked at me as if amazed.

I didn't say anything.

"Maybe I'd like to read your poems."

"I don't write poems anymore. That book is really old."

He got his boots, and as he bent over to put them on he cut a dainty fart. He paused in his bend and made a fussing noise, as if irritated at himself for farting. It was O.K. with me, though, and I think he realized that. I hoped so. Once, I fell asleep on a train and drooled in front of my fellow-passenger; when I woke and glanced at him in embarrassed realization, I saw right away that he had borne with

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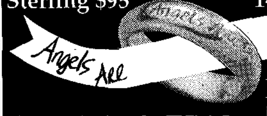

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my drool. That subtle acceptance from a total stranger was deeply satisfying to me, and I was pleased to give it to someone else.

He stood up and stumbled over a cat toy. "I'll miss you," he said.

"Oh, please." My words were like quick, shallow water. I handed him his coat, and he put it on.

"You won't give me your number?" he asked.

I leaned forward and put my head on his shoulder. Sheathed in his coat, it felt impersonal and kind. He held me for a moment, and I thought I could feel him experimenting with the sensation of kindness.

"No," I said.

AFTER he left, I sat for almost an hour, allowing my body to return to aloneness and safety. Then I took a bath and got in bed. It was almost seven o'clock, and the room was filling with daylight. My moist skin made my pajamas damp and warm. There were sounds from the courtyard outside my window; two of my neighbors were out in the garden, talking in low voices. They were talking about the bonnets and dresses they were making to wear at the Castro Easter parade.

I wondered why I had told Frederick that I thought he was nice. Probably for the same reason that I had sweet dreams about a petty sadist. I tried to think of my dead sex partner, but my memories of him were truncated, and gray with elapsed time. I could only imagine him with flat, terrified eyes, his hands making a gesture that was too cramped and weak to signify anything. I don't know why I imagined him this way, since I had never seen him make such expressions or gestures. I tried to imagine saying goodbye to him, but it didn't work. I had a sensation of all my memories growing truncated and gray, stretching out over a lengthening span of years, slowly dissolving into broken pieces of imagery weighted with inexplicable feeling.

I turned onto my side and closed my eyes, as if doing so would finally bring the experience to an end. I would've liked to cry, but I couldn't. From the garden, I heard one of my neighbors describe his bonnet as "robin's-egg blue." He must've shown it to the other neighbor, because I heard a second voice say, "Oh, it's *so* special." He was being sarcastic, but he also meant it. ♦

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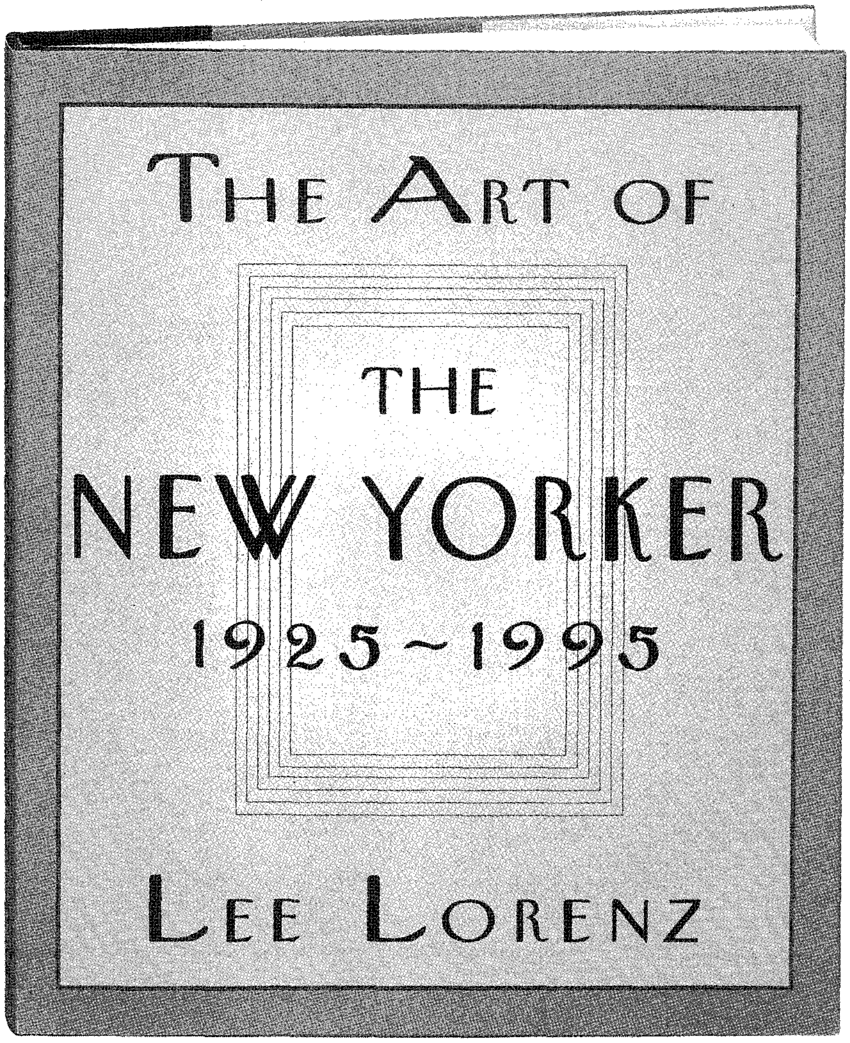

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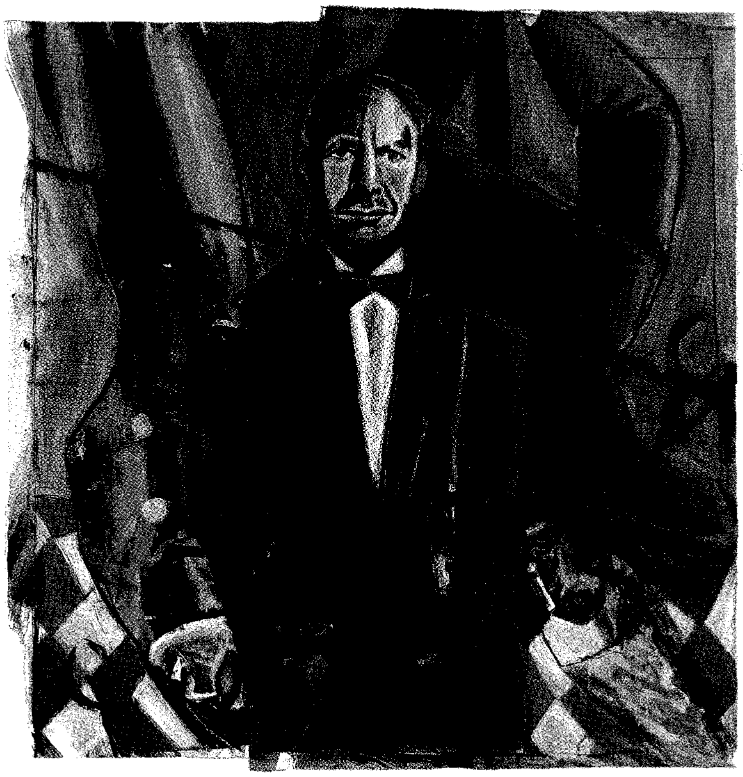
BURNING QUESTIONS

A monumental reinterpretation of why the Inquisition happened.

BY VICTOR PERERA

NEARLY a century after Henry Charles Lea, the great North American historian, undertook his landmark four-volume "History of the Inquisition of Spain," Cornell's professor emeritus Benzion Netanyahu has published a work of similarly prodigious scholarship on the subject: "The Origins of the Inquisition in Fifteenth Century Spain" (Random House; $50). Like his predecessor, Netanyahu offers a retrospective of the cultural forces that gave rise to the Santo Oficio, or Holy Office, whose secret labors against heresy converted the Spanish—in Lea's words—"from the most tolerant to the most intolerant nation in Europe." Netanyahu departs from Lea and most contemporary historians, however, by arguing—exhaustively—that the driving force behind the introduction of the Inquisition, by Pope Sixtus IV and Ferdinand of Aragon, in 1478, was neither religious fanaticism nor economic opportunism but, rather, a calculated response to escalating racial bigotry.


Benzion Netanyahu: *Is the Inquisition at all comparable to the Holocaust?*

ANDREA VENTURA

During the three-hundred-and-fifty-year history of the Spanish Inquisition, its tribunals persecuted approximately a hundred thousand Jewish converts, known as *conversos*, for the heresy of *judaizar*, or Judaizing—an insidious term applied to new Christians who were alleged to practice Jewish rituals in secret. The vast majority of the accused *conversos* were stripped of their worldly goods, which were divided between the Spanish monarchy and the Holy Office. Tens of thousands of *conversos* were imprisoned in the Holy Office's dungeons. The Inquisitors—many of them Dominican friars—elicited confessions and vows of repentance in the shadow of torture instruments so gruesome in appearance that many penitents poured out their heresies—real or invented—at the mere sight of them. Accused Judaizers who remained impenitent were burned alive in public executions. These autos-da-fé were rivalled as spectacle only by the bullfights, and they offered witnesses the additional dividend of being an uplifting religious event. During the eighteen-year tenure of the first Inquisitor General, the infamous Friar Tomás de Torquemada, as many as two thousand *conversos* were "relaxed" to secular authorities and burned at the stake; three thousand more were burned in effigy after they died in prison or fled the country; and nearly forty thousand were "reconciled" to the Church after forfeiting their possessions and being sentenced to prison, often for life.

JEWS had lived in the Iberian Peninsula for well over a thousand years before the Inquisition. The noble families Ibn Daud and Abravanel, which claim descent from King David, affirm that their forebears arrived in Iberia from the Holy Land in the sixth century B.C., following Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of Solomon's Temple. The Hebrew word *sepharad*, which may have designated the westernmost lands in the Mediterranean—today's Spain and Portugal—dates from Old Testament times: according to some scholars, Iberian Jews were already known as Sephardim when Jesus walked the hills of Galilee.

One of the earliest recorded references to Iberian Jews appears in the fourth century, in a canon of the Spanish Council at Elvira, which prohibited Jews from marrying Christians. These and other prohibitions were signposts to a progressive deterioration in the Jews' standing, which led to restrictions on their liberties under the Visigothic kings and to later persecutions by Almohad Muslims, from Morocco, and by the Castilian monarchs.

By the end of the fourteenth century, popular resentment against Jewish moneylenders and tax collectors had reached a fever pitch. In 1391, a pogrom in Seville was sparked by a Jew-hating priest, Ferrán Martínez; thousands of Jewish men were butchered in the streets, their wives and children sold into slavery. It was the greatest catastrophe that had befallen European Jewry up to that time, and twenty thousand of the survivors were converted to Christianity in the ensuing decades. Fifty-eight years later, in 1449, there was a violent upris-

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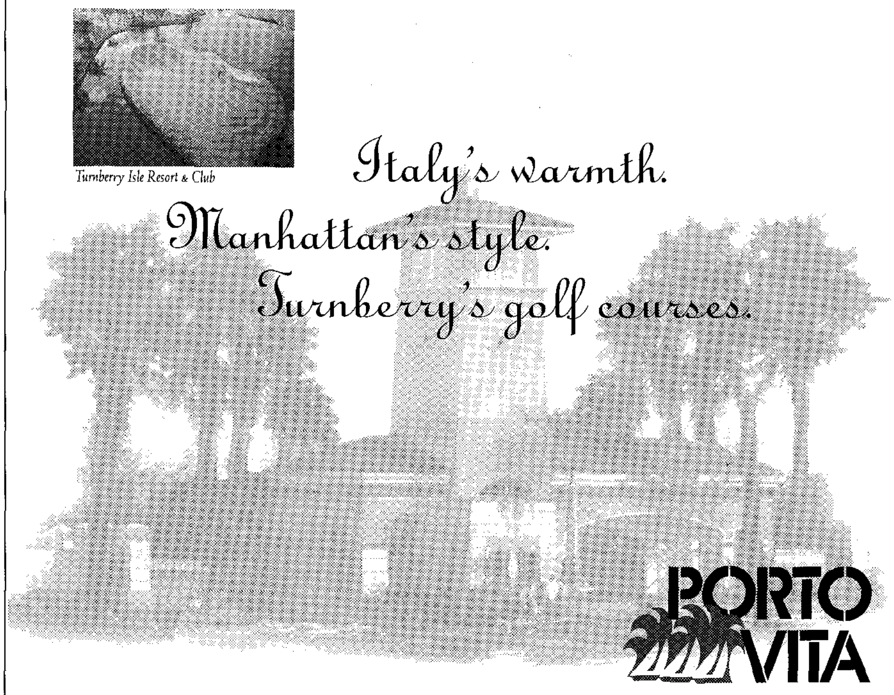

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ing against Jewish converts in Toledo, one that Netanyahu documents at length. The insurgents defied both the monarchy and the Holy See by enacting a statute that removed all *conversos* from office and expelled them from the city. The Jews' decline in the kingdoms of Aragon and Castile culminated in 1478 with the introduction of the Inquisition; fourteen years after that—on the pretext that Jewish influence on the *conversos* impaired the Holy Office's labors against heresy—Ferdinand expelled the Jews from Spain altogether.

My own family history exemplifies the complexities of Jewish identity during this period. Under the original family name, Abendana, my ancestors, who had emigrated to Toledo from Morocco, survived the 1391 pogrom and remained Jews throughout the following century, only to be expelled in 1492. In Portugal, they submitted to conversion and adopted the Old Christian name Pereira. But in 1547 the Inquisition spread to Portugal and targeted hundreds of Pereiras who had persisted in practicing their Jewish religion in secret; soon large numbers of *converso* Pereiras were fleeing the Iberian Peninsula and settling in other European cities and in the Levant. My direct ancestors, like most emigrant Pereiras, reclaimed their Jewish origins once they reached a safe haven, but the majority of these same Pereiras, subject to economic and cultural pressures, relapsed into Christianity within two or three generations.

IN Netanyahu's view, Sephardic civilization peaked under the Catholic kings in Castile between the eleventh and the thirteenth centuries, when Jewish physicians, diplomats, and financiers enjoyed enormous prestige and influence in court. (He conspicuously gives short shrift to Muslim rule in Andalusia between the tenth and the twelfth centuries—the era that gave birth to the great Jewish poets and to the philosopher Maimonides, and came to be known as the Jewish Golden Age in Spain.) But the long history of reciprocal loyalty between Jews and *conversos* and their Catholic monarchs ended with the calamities and betrayals of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. After painstakingly examining pre-Inquisition documents by Jews, *conversos*, and Old Chris-

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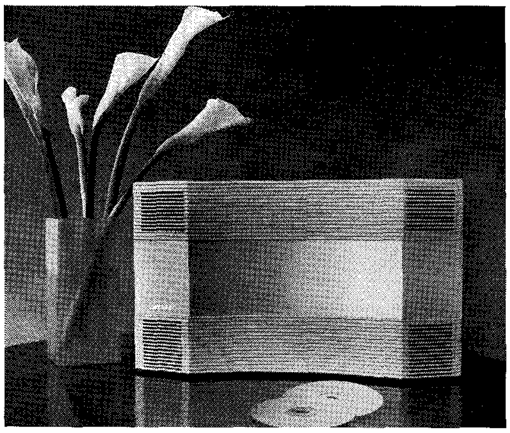

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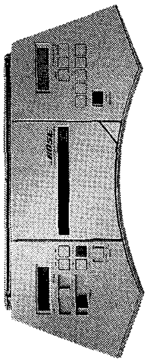

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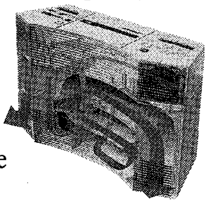

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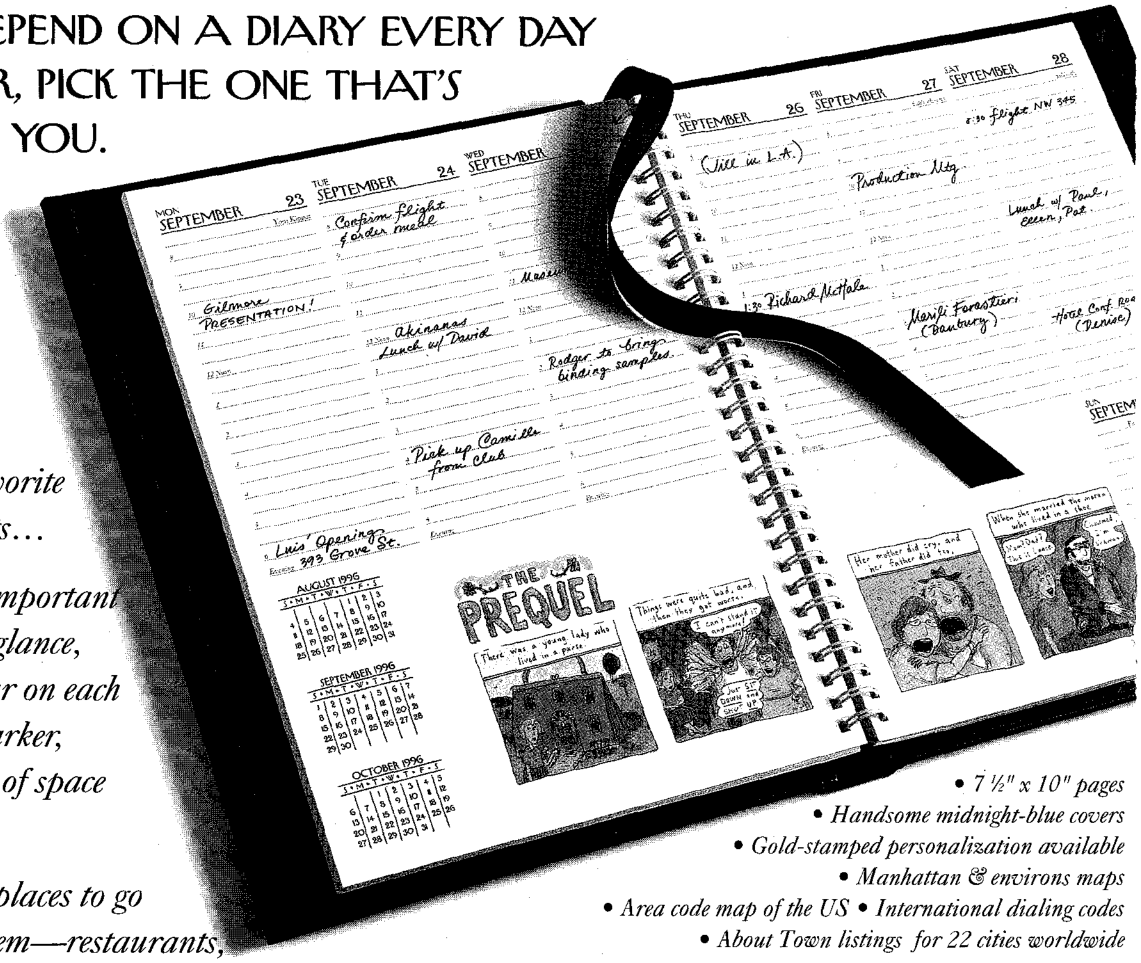
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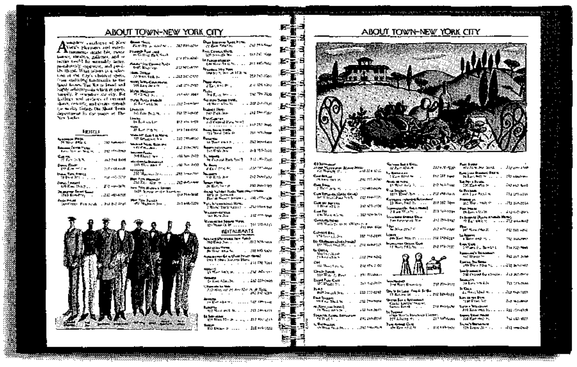
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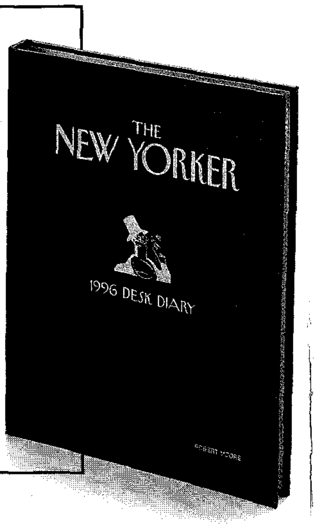
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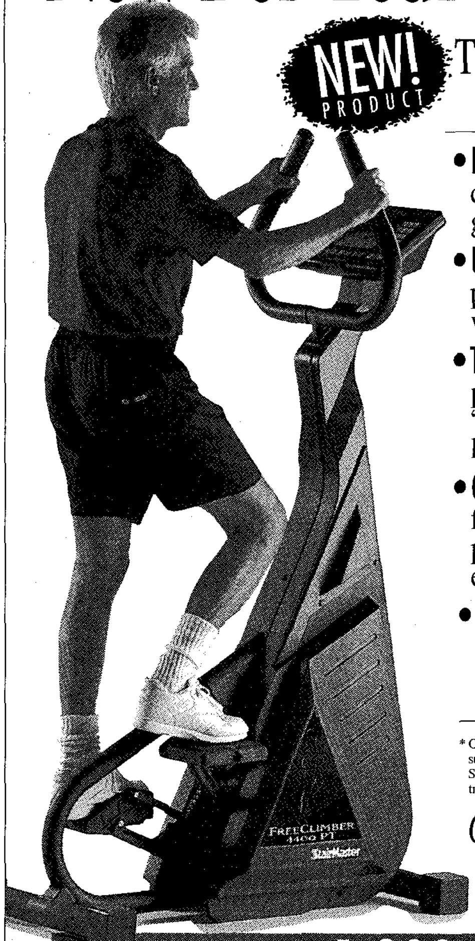
tians which were overlooked or slighted by his predecessors, Netanyahu concludes that the persecutions of the Jews and the Jewish converts were racist at the core, and that their long-term consequences within Spain and abroad laid the foundations for modern anti-Semitism.

Anti-Semitism has a long history, as Netanyahu himself notes when he traces the birth of the hatred of Jews to 525 B.C., with the Persian conquest of Egypt. In the ancient world as well as in Christian Spain, the Jews' rise in favor with the ruling élites released pent-up envy and hatred that escalated from religious to racist persecution. In nearly all instances, the ruling élite's favoritism ended abruptly—and violently—when the Jews' usefulness to it proved too costly. One of the tragedies of the Inquisition, Netanyahu compellingly argues, is that neither the Jews nor the *conversos* understood the deeper—that is, racial and national—source of their vulnerability: they believed that the bitter animosity against them sprang primarily from social, religious, and economic motives. After all, the Spanish monarchs had long protected the Jews and *conversos* who served them, and many *conversos* had sought intermarriage with titled families to strengthen that protection. The *conversos*—unlike the Jews, who were barred from the artisans' guilds and most aristocratic callings—had risen in the ranks of the royal court and the universities, and also in the inner councils of laical and Church society.

Netanyahu maintains that the Spanish kings, for their part, recognized that "they were faced with an elemental force which was most difficult to suppress and most dangerous to ignore"—a rising tide of racist hatred, which was threatening to engulf even Old Christian families who had intermarried with the *conversos*. As popular anti-Semitic outbreaks spread through Castile and Aragon in the decades following the Toledo uprising of 1449, Ferdinand and Isabella became convinced that the rebellious mobs—spurred on by rabble-rousers like the Franciscan friar Alonso de Espina, a descendant of *conversos* who called for the forced conversion of all Jews and the expulsion of the obdurate ones—posed a threat to the monarchy itself. In establishing the Inquisition, then, Ferdinand was attempting to prevent a bloodbath,



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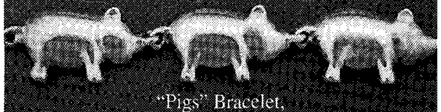

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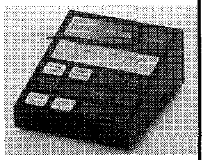

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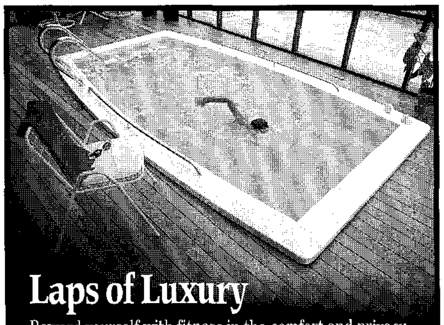

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and was also hoping to harness the rebels' racist hatreds and redirect them toward consolidating the new Hispanic nation forged by his marriage to Isabella, which had joined the warring feudal kingdoms of Aragon and Castile.

This portrayal of the Catholic monarchs conflicts with both the religious explanations of the Inquisition and the modern explanation, in which economic imperatives are viewed as foremost among Ferdinand's motives. Juan Antonio Llorente was the first nineteenth-century historian to underscore the enormous costs of the reconquest of Granada and of Ferdinand's wars in Portugal and Italy. As he saw it, the Inquisition proved convenient to Ferdinand for the same reason that the expulsion of the Jews did: it was an opportunity to confiscate the fortunes of Jews and *conversos* in order to underwrite his imperial designs. Prior to the nineteenth century, most historians contended that the Inquisition had been established primarily to fight heresies, of which the Jewish heresy was the first. Netanyahu acknowledges the economics of the Inquisition but believes that financial concerns were secondary to Ferdinand's grandiose political aspirations. He also downgrades the pious Isabella's religious influence and maintains that Ferdinand had a thinly veiled contempt for the Popes. He believes that Ferdinand's religiosity was a convenient mask for his Machiavellian ambitions:

> For Ferdinand was possessed with *one* desire, which was to strengthen and expand his power; and to attain this end, he knew no other means save the art of politics. Indeed, rather than an art, politics was to him a science—the science of gaining and expanding power, which to him was not only "beyond good and evil," but also beyond man's deepest emotions.

According to Netanyahu, Ferdinand won the rivalry with the Popes hands down, and placed a royal seal on the Inquisition by appropriating the power to appoint its chief officers and control its revenues.

AT the heart of Netanyahu's argument is his definition of the *conversos* themselves, for if these New Christians—many of whom had been converted under duress—were still practicing Judaism in secret the Church campaign against heresy was not necessarily racially motivated. In earlier works

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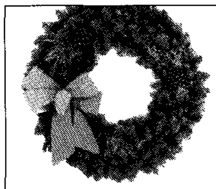

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on Spain's *conversos*, Netanyahu carefully laid the underpinnings for his racial theory. He contends that the large majority of Jews who were converted as a result of the fourteenth-century persecutions had become assimilated Christians by the time the Inquisition tribunals were set up, and Judaizers had dwindled nearly to the vanishing point. With this argument, he seems bent on discrediting one of his chief rivals, a respected German-Jewish scholar named Yitzhak Baer, who wrote in the nineteen-fifties that most *conversos* remained Jews at heart and courageously persisted in secretly observing Jewish rites. Netanyahu is so certain that the great majority of converts genuinely embraced Christianity that he uses the terms *converso* and New Christian synonymously with Marrano, a pejorative that the clergy—and most scholars—applied principally to Judaizers (the word is Spanish for "swine").

Netanyahu expresses admiration for German Jews during the eleventh-century Crusade, who, more often than their Spanish coreligionists, suffered martyrdom for their faith. But, in contrast to Germany's Jews, who were concentrated in close-knit communities outside the Christian mainstream, Spain's Jews had integrated with their host culture to a far greater degree. Furthermore, the Spanish Jews, unlike the Germans, were offered the alternative of conversion. Even Maimonides, as Netanyahu acknowledges, hailed martyrdom but gave moral sanction to Jews who became converted in extremis.

One of the most painful ironies of the Inquisition is that among the harshest persecutors of Jews and relapsed *conversos* were Jewish converts who had risen to high rank in the Church. The most implacable of all may have been Pablo de Santa María, bishop of Burgos, who had been the respected Chief Rabbi Don Solomon Halevi before his conversion, in 1391, at the age of thirty-eight. (Netanyahu conjectures that his skeptical cast of mind prevailed when he learned of the slaughter of his brethren in Seville and foresaw the destruction of Burgos's Jewry; the road to conversion in Spain was often paved with the detritus of failed deliverance.) In their zeal to convert—by force, if necessary—all their former coreligionists, Pablo and his *converso* disciples went far beyond the Draconian measures recommended by

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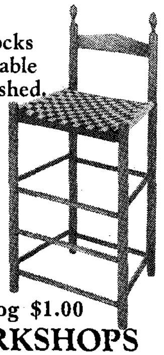

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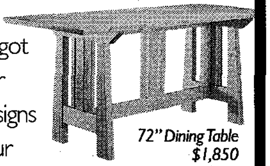
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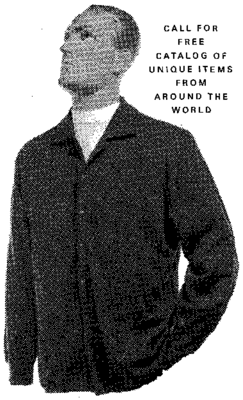
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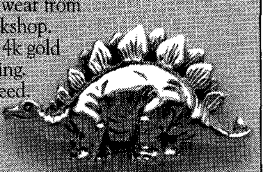
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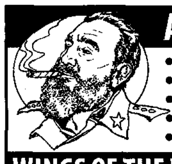
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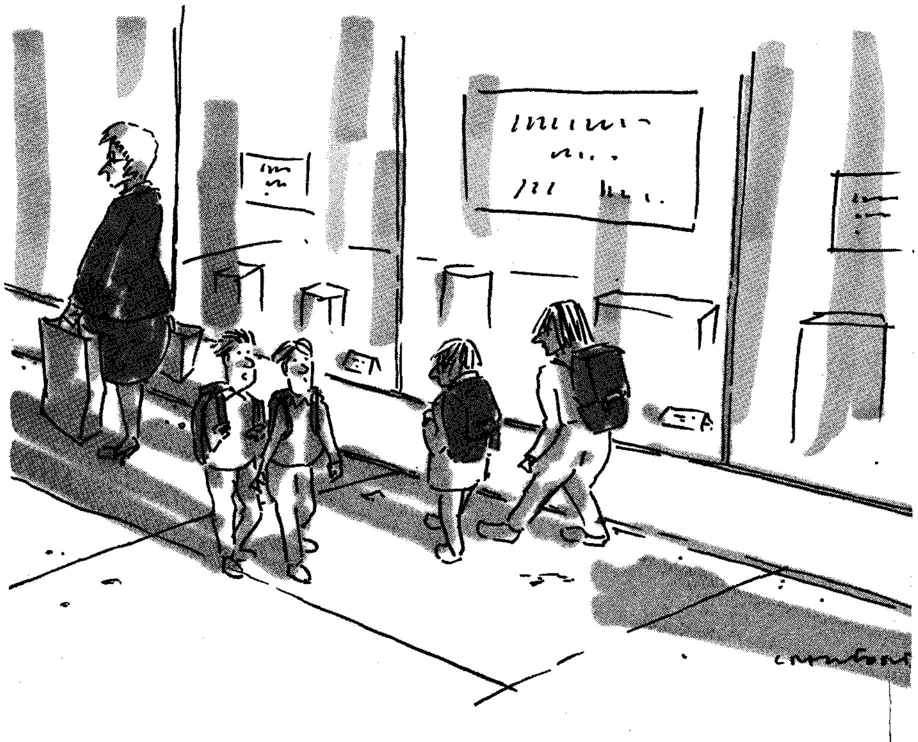
Old Christian churchmen. Even the fanatical Dominican evangelizer Vincent Ferrer, whose incendiary homilies frightened thousands of Jews into conversion, disapproved of forcible conversion, because it violated canon law.

Is the persecution of Jewish converts during the Inquisition at all comparable to the fate of Europe's Jews in our century's Holocaust? Netanyahu tackles this prickly issue toward the end of his book, arguing that the hatred in medieval Spain which labelled the Jews a "race" inferior to pure-blooded Christians foreshadowed the race laws in Nazi Germany. Certainly the parallels are striking. The Spanish Christians' obsession with *limpieza de sangre*, or purity of blood, had its origin in the vast numbers of intermarriages between *conversos* and the Old Christian titled families. Whereas in the fourteenth and the early fifteenth centuries churchmen had proposed intermarriage as the ideal solution to the *converso* problem, by the sixteenth century it was regarded as the scourge of a racially and religiously "pure" Spain. (Spain's most prominent victim of the racial stigma may have been Miguel de Cervantes, whose "Don Quixote" fell afoul of the Inquisition's censors, and who became obsessed with the issue of *limpieza.*) From the end of the sixteenth century and onward for more than two hundred years, Spaniards seeking office in the military or religious orders had to prove they were of pure Old Christian descent. The *limpieza* statutes allied the Church bureaucracy and the heraldic orders with an entrenched popular sentiment against the "Christ killer" who was believed to be dormant in the veins of every *converso.* This remained so until the late seventeen-hundreds, when the integration of the New Christians was so advanced that it placed them beyond the reach of the Inquisitors. Indeed, the crowning paradox of the Inquisition may be that the same Catholic Church that persecuted Jews and *conversos* for four hundred years eventually absorbed these New Christians, thereby saving them from its own fanatically racist friars and bishops.

In an appendix on the parallels between racism in Germany and racism in Spain, Netanyahu notes the rise of German racial discrimination early in the nineteenth century, when religious prejudice had abated; many Germans feared that ethnic assimilation of the Jews would pollute the Germanic race. The anti-Semitic campaigns in the aftermath of the First World War paved the way for the racist Nuremberg laws of the Nazi era. In fifteenth-century



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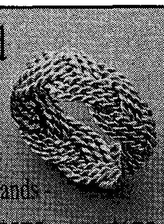

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Cartouche spells 'Joan'
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Spain, as in Nazi-occupied Europe, Jews were confined to walled ghettos and made to wear identifying badges; even more eerily, German Jews were never addressed by the honorific "Herr," just as their Spanish counterparts had been forbidden to place "Don" before their names. (In a compounded irony, "don" may derive from the Hebrew word *adon*, meaning "sire" or "lord.") Spain's *limpieza* statutes found an echo in the Nazis' codification of the lowest percentage of Semitic blood that labelled a person a Jew and marked him or her for extinction. To the Nazi ideologues of the twentieth century, as to the demagogue friars of fifteenth-century Spain, racism was, in Netanyahu's words, "the last obstacle that anti-Semitism can put up to the assimilation of the Jews."

Netanyahu comes closest to bridging Toledo and Berlin when he exposes the process by which Jews and *conversos* came to be regarded as "aliens" by a ruler intent on building a Spanish nation from the feudal kingdoms of Aragon and Castile. Nationhood, Netanyahu reminds us, is a brutal process requiring an alien opposition against which the new nation can forge its identity. Of course, whereas the Nazis very nearly succeeded in eradicating European Jewry, in Spain the vast majority of *conversos* foiled the racists' genocidal agenda by being absorbed by the Catholic Church. Netanyahu believes, however, that the Jews of Spain, had they not been expelled, might have been exterminated, as they were in Germany during the Third Reich.

SPAIN and its Inquisition have produced their share of earnest, responsible investigators since the passing of Henry Charles Lea, among them Yitzhak Baer and the redoubtable English historian Cecil Roth. It may be a measure of Netanyahu's respect for Lea that he cites him more extensively than any modern investigator (and calls him "great" twice on one page), alternately picking quarrels with and deferring to him as though he were a mentor or a teacher. Lea was an elegant stylist who wrote for a wide literate public. A Philadelphian of Quaker mercantile stock, he did not shy away from large moral pronouncements. None of the other historians cited in Netanyahu's work approached the Inquisition the way Lea

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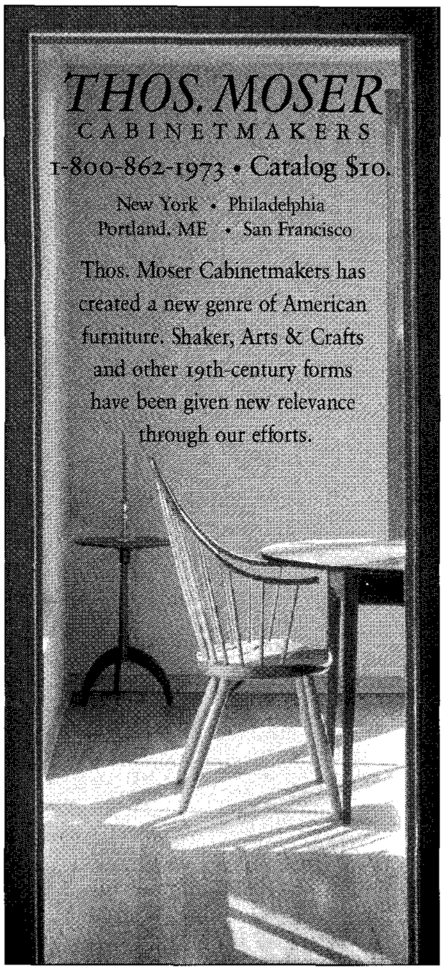

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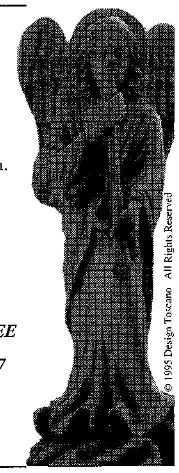

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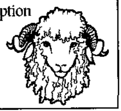

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did—as a historic event of momentous human drama. Lea presents Ferdinand and Isabella as larger-than-life yet fallible mortals, whose idiosyncrasies had a tremendous impact on the events they set in motion.

Netanyahu is far more polemical than Lea: he carves out his turf with a calculated parsing of sources, jousts with rival authorities who hold opposing views, and settles scores with those he regards as his inferiors. He grows increasingly confident as the book progresses, layering his arguments with reams of evidence, as though to seal his racial hypothesis with an airtight incontrovertibility. And this hypothesis, while hardly new, has been newly defined by two historic events that marked Netanyahu's own life profoundly: the Nazi Holocaust and the birth of the State of Israel. Born in Warsaw in 1910, Netanyahu emigrated to Palestine as a child, and during his mid-twenties he was a member of Ze'ev Jabotinsky's circle of militant Zionists. Yet it is the reality of the Holocaust that breathes life into Netanyahu's racial hypothesis and colors his almost mystical jeremiads against the Inquisitors:

> What moved them above all was a deep-seated hatred—fierce, implacable, and infernal hatred—for everything related to anything Jewish, be it ethnic or religious, social or intellectual—that hatred which stemmed from prejudice and a tradition rooted in the peculiar condition of the Jews. Without bearing in mind this special hatred and the various sources from which it sprang, one cannot understand its volcanic outburst through the birth of the Inquisition and its early operations, or its outpouring of burning lava for more than three and a half centuries.

For Netanyahu, clearly, anti-Semitism is not simply an example of ethnic hostility in one of its many guises. An emblematic dispute between Netanyahu and Lea concerns the Inquisition's persecution of the Muslims who were converted to Christianity and were known as Moriscos. Netanyahu disagrees with Lea's judgment that Spain's attitude toward the Moriscos was no different from its attitude toward *conversos* and other "alien races." Lea saw the hundred-year war against the Moriscos as one more example, in common with the later persecutions of Lutherans, Erasmists, and Illuminists, of the Holy Office's determination to pursue genocide

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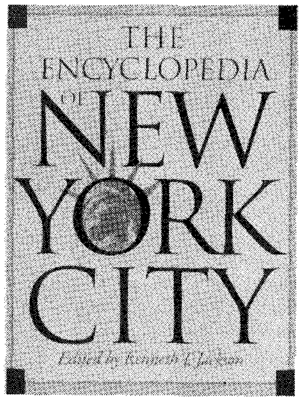

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as a means of perpetuating itself. But Netanyahu insists that "the problem of the conversos belonged to a different category." He goes on, "It is to solve *their* problem, and theirs alone, that the Spanish Inquisition was erected." In reading this, one cannot help recalling the opinion widely held within Israel and elsewhere that the Holocaust was special and apart, and it is never to be compared with any other program of ethnic extermination.

NEARLY a century ago, Lea cautioned that the superabundance of documents in the immense Spanish archives assured that no single investigator would ever exhaust the Inquisition or resolve all its paradoxes and contradictions. The Inquisitors carried on their labors under a veil of secrecy and created a climate of ambiguity and equivocation that allowed room for multiple interpretations of their motives. There will always be Christian apologists who cite passages in Augustine's writings and later Christian sources to laud the Holy Office as the prototype of a Catholic utopia and an engine of social progress. And there will always be those who make the spurious claim that the Inquisition dampened religious hatreds and shed far less blood than the secular courts or the anti-Semitic riots that preceded it. But whereas the Inquisitors were good at covering their traces—their torturers were supposed to avoid breaking bones or drawing blood—there is no exculpating the Holy Office from the permanent harm it did during its extended tenure of institutionalized intolerance, not only of religions it regarded as alien but of all "contaminations" of Spain's body politic by bloodlines and ideas it considered impure. And the infamy of the Holy Office's autos-da-fé, its book burnings and secret persecutions of alien religions and races spread far beyond Spain's borders into other European countries and the New World.

Any serious study of the Inquisition is partly a reflection of the political and social climate in which it is written. Netanyahu's formidable investigation will take its place among the major works of contemporary historiography, and future scholars may very well endorse his view that the hatreds that spawned the In-

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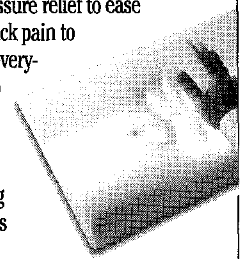

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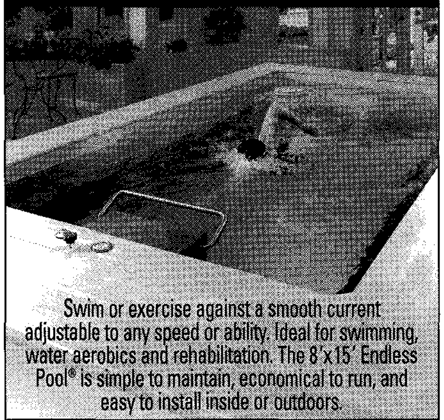

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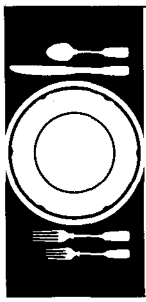

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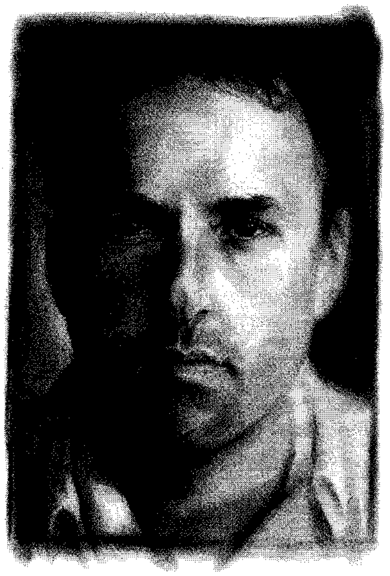
quisition were, at bottom, anti-Semitic, lethal, and timeless. Yet, while Netanyahu fervently and convincingly argues that—in the eyes of a malevolent world—a Jew is always a Jew, he seems a bit contemptuous of the Jews who struggle with the everyday realities of this eternal hatred. His attitude toward the *conversos* who chose assimilation over martyrdom is reminiscent of the traditional contempt in which the unresisting converts were held by Jews in Spain and abroad. Most Jews, however, openly supported those who became converted under duress: they named them *anusim*, or "coerced ones," and even taught them prayers to keep their faith alive. These were the Marranos whom Baer and Lea called heroic—who furtively lighted the Sabbath candles and fasted on the Day of Atonement. Netanyahu is lukewarm toward the *anusim* at best, and he scants the hundreds of *conversos* who, like my ancestors, chose to flee the Iberian Peninsula and reclaim their Jewish origins.

Hannah Arendt's controversial book "Eichmann in Jerusalem" raised the issue of the Jews' passivity in the face of an implacable apparatus of extermination. For Netanyahu, anything short of outright defiance and opposition is anathema. It is no coincidence that his book is dedicated "with unrelieved grief" to the memory of his son Jonathan, who fell while leading the 1976 Entebbe commando raid that freed Israeli and other Jewish hostages in Idi Amin's Uganda. Another son of Netanyahu's, Benjamin, heads Israel's right-wing Likud coalition. The phrase "Never again" reverberates throughout his writings, investing them with an iron determination to expunge the stigma of victimhood from Jewish history and replace it with a twentieth-century version of the warrior Maccabees. And it is in this respect that Netanyahu's hugely ambitious reconsideration of the Inquisition most starkly exhibits the Holocaust's indelible stamp. ♦

SEVEN DAYS

An Irish son re-creates his world.

BY HERMIONE LEE



Colum McCann

SCOTT HUNT

"NOTHING wrong with being romantic, I said to the sky. To hell with the curse on sentimentality." It's a rash manifesto for a first novel, especially if your models are, as the young Irishman Colum McCann's seem to be, powerfully influential men of feeling, like Hemingway and Kerouac, Cormac McCarthy and Bruce Chatwin. McCann's title, "Songdogs" (Metropolitan; $22.50), echoes Chatwin's "The Songlines." And, as Chatwin describes the Australian Aborigines singing the land into being, McCann relates the Navajo legend of how the coyotes "howled the world into existence," their songs "the beginning of all other songs" in the universe.

Readers unmoved by native creation myths and made edgy by the least whiff of Beat-style mystic travelogue may want to get off here, but they should stay and hear the song. This is not a flawless novel. McCann can indeed be sentimental, and he has his vatic moments: "Water is what we are made of. It has its own solitude," or "Walking was holy—it cleared the mind." And he loves to overwrite, as in "Men still found profligacy rising up in their groins." But the weaknesses are tied in to the book's immensely promising virtues—its eloquent intensity, its passionate image-making, its magical feeling for space and place and time. "Songdogs" is a quest story with multiple quests; they alternate and overlap and at last dovetail, as in an elegant piece of carpentry. But they don't conclude. It's a nice paradox that the novel's satisfying structure encloses stories of loss, compromise, and unsolved mystery.

Conor, the storyteller, has come back to Ireland at the age of twenty-three, after five years in London, America, and Mexico, where he was searching futilely for his mother, who vanished when he was twelve. He returns to rediscover his father, who is in his seventies—ill, seedy, obstinate, and smelly, a disgusting old man in a small town in County Mayo, fishing doggedly in the turgid, polluted river. Through the seven days of Conor's visit (each day a chapter, opening out into the past), the father fishes and smokes himself to death, and the son, feeling "a foul revulsion and love for him," tries to clean up the house and the old man, and to understand his parents—and himself. The past comes into focus through his memories of his mother's stories and through his descriptions of the photographs his father no longer takes.

The father, Michael Lyons, might have been another Walker Evans or Robert Capa. A foundling, brought up by two local Protestant ladies (whose death by drowning is one of the novel's light moments of magical realism), he left Ireland at twenty with two new Leica cameras, to take photographs (brilliantly imagined by McCann) in the Spanish Civil War. Then he travels to Mexico, where he meets and marries a spirited young Mexican girl named Juanita. They live in her village with her formidable mother until the mother dies and Lyons scandalizes the locals—as he will later shock his similarly puritan Catholic neighbors in Ireland—with his nude photographs of his wife.

They leave for the United States, and journey from San Francisco to the Bronx, through America's fifties and sixties. In Wyoming—where the author works in a dazzling set piece on firefighting—they are befriended by McCann's most glamorous character, Cici, a Beat poet-heroine-nomad. A kind of female Kerouac, she ends up as an addict, her poetry all gone. Her love for Juanita is the novel's tenderest romance: Cici is the only person in the book who makes much of the woman who is otherwise treated merely as a daughter, a wife, a mother, or a photographic subject.

Back in Ireland, Conor is born, but life is disappointing; the marriage empties. Juanita makes only one friend, goodhearted Mrs. O'Leary, and longs for Mexico. When Lyons' erotic photography becomes scandalous public knowledge once more, and Juanita an object of prurient scorn, she takes dramatic revenge, and disappears.

FOR all its vivid journeyings, "Songdogs" is at its very best with riskily familiar material—the drab, stale lives of old Irishmen sitting out time in the same bar:

> One sported a walrus moustache and wore shiny grey trousers, and he often slid off the end barstool, finishing his Guinness while sitting on the floor, a hedge of white cream above his lip. There was a misanthrope with a face like an oven-fresh roll, taking tenpenny pieces from behind his own ear. One man smelled of vinegar when he sweated. . . . All of them seemed to cough together in a choir, blowing their noses into the palms of their hands, bleary-eyed over newspapers, exhausted over whiskeys.

Yeats' later poems, especially "Sailing to Byzantium," are often echoed here. But instead of opposing decrepit old age ("a tattered coat upon a stick") with art and poetry, as Yeats does, the narrator's aged father is in the end an inspiration—the unlikely "singing master" of his son's soul. And McCann rewrites Yeats politically as well as aesthetically. His Ireland is no country for *young* men. The old men are still there; the young have all gone to America.

This comedy of torpidity is finely done. And, for all its sadnesses, "Songdogs" reads like a celebration. It has an underlying religious imagery: a pattern of fire and water for cleansing and expiation, seven days for the creation of a touching moment of joy between father and son. But the religion that this novel movingly extolls is one of nature, art, and human energy, not of orthodox pieties. A badly made fly, in the father's opinion, "is about as good as a Hail Mary in an air raid." ♦

CORRECTION OF THE WEEK

[*From the Chicago Tribune*]

In the last line of an item in Sunday's "Chicago this week" column, Judge Eugene Wojcik's name was mistakenly substituted for that of convicted murderer Guinevere Garcia. Garcia faces execution by lethal injection on Nov. 21. The Tribune regrets the error.

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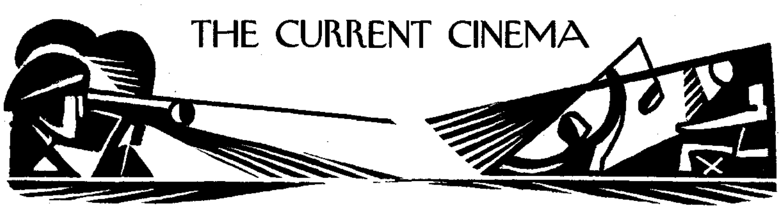
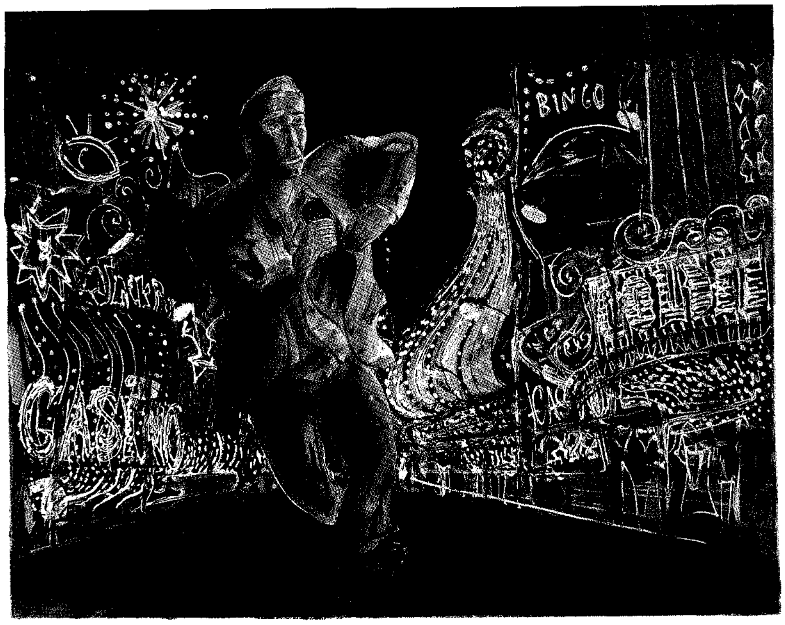


CLOSING TIME

A brilliant, uncompromising portrayal of an alcoholic's dead end in Vegas.

BY TERRENCE RAFFERTY



Nicolas Cage hits the bottle in Mike Figgis's "Leaving Las Vegas."

JOE DAVIS

BEN SANDERSON (Nicolas Cage), the hero of Mike Figgis's startlingly beautiful "Leaving Las Vegas," is a hopeless drunk, and his hopelessness is pure: undiluted by even the tiniest splash of regret, resolve, or simple shame. He has no interest in analyzing his problem; he says that he can't remember whether he started drinking too much because his wife left him or his wife left him because he drank too much. Looking at him, you can believe the improbable lapse of memory. To Ben, the past is ancient history, blurred and irrelevant, and any attempt to be more precise would be an exercise in pedantry—it wouldn't change a thing. And he has no desire to reform: he warns his new girlfriend, a young Vegas hooker named Sera (Elisabeth Shue), "You can never, ever ask me to stop drinking." In a sense, Ben has deliberately removed himself from the ordinary flow of time, and has taken up residence in a dark, muffled, oddly comfortable place where neither the past nor the future has any meaning. After getting fired from his movie-production job in Los Angeles, Ben cashes his severance check, throws out or burns almost all his possessions, and heads for Vegas, as if guided by a kind of homing instinct. It's the ideal spot for him, specifically because liquor is available around the clock, and generally because clocks don't matter there at all. In Las Vegas, even the distinction between day and night seems laughably abstract: the casinos never close, and they have no windows; the motel rooms have heavy curtains to keep out the desert sun; the streets, lit by neon, are always as bright as noon. Life there is boiled down to a perpetual suspended present, and that suits Ben perfectly.

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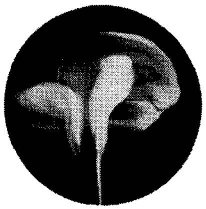

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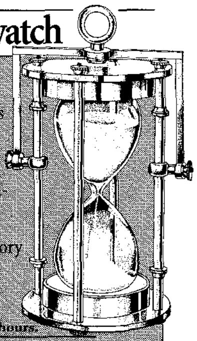

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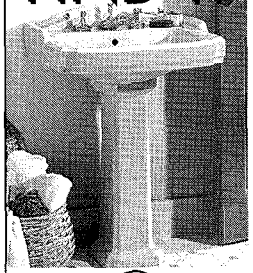

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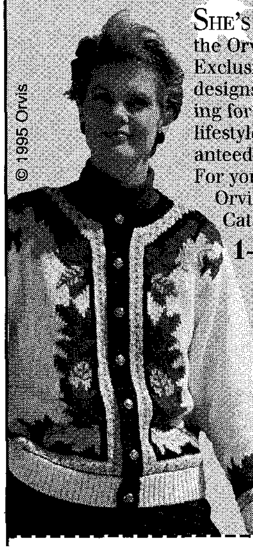
He is consciously drinking himself to death, and he has selected Las Vegas as the place where he can achieve his goal with the fewest distractions—where all he has to do is be his alcoholic self and let nature take its course, one dwindling day at a time.

He is, to say the least, a very unusual hero. This guy is distinctly different from every other drunk you've ever seen on the screen. Although Cage is often explosively funny, his Ben has little in common with the slapstick boozers played by W.C. Fields, Dudley Moore (in the "Arthur" movies), and legions of other comedians from the silent era on; and, although he sometimes, in difficult situations, adopts a hilariously "cultivated" British accent, he isn't likely to remind anyone of the urbane tipplers who floated through the swanky Neverland of thirties romantic comedy. And Ben has even less in common with the protagonists of the relatively few serious films about alcoholism. He has none of the furtive, embarrassed cunning—the sneakiness—that was the dominant feature of Ray Milland's character in "The Lost Weekend." Ben never tries to hide his condition, and he has long since stopped worrying that people will view his alcoholism as a sign of failure or moral weakness. (Like the hero of "The Lost Weekend," Ben is an unsuccessful writer, but neither he nor the movie itself uses that creative frustration to explain what he has become.) And, unlike Jack Lemmon and Lee Remick in "Days of Wine and Roses," Ben makes no attempt to rehabilitate himself, and that dogged refusal exempts him (and the audience) from the agonies of struggle—from the excruciating alternation of sobriety and drunken binges, proud optimism and self-loathing despair.

The problem with alcoholism as a dramatic subject is inherent in the disease: chronic conditions tend to produce static narratives. What's really extraordinary about "Leaving Las Vegas" is that the picture, like its hero, doesn't waste time flailing against the constant, insistent demands of its own nature. Figgis accepts the fact that Ben will not change, that this is the story of a man who has stripped his existence to one clear, rigorous, and inexora-

"She always wears such beautiful sweaters!"



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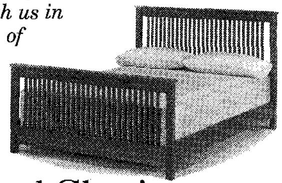

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ble principle: he will drink—because drinking is the most fundamental, immutable element of who he is—and die of it. Ben is a drowning man who has resigned himself, with a peculiar sort of serenity, to going under. (In one of the film's most eerily suggestive scenes, he plunges into a motel pool and remains below the surface for what seems an impossibly long time—with a bottle raised to his lips.) Figgis's screenplay is faithful to the bracingly objective tone of its source, a 1990 novel that was the first and last book by a talented young writer named John O'Brien (who killed himself in 1994, at the age of thirty-three). The sole trace of conventional drama in the story is Ben's affair with Sera, which seems at first to hold out some faint hope of salvation. But the possibility that love will rescue the hero from his fate vanishes quickly, like a mirage: the core of the relationship—its strength—is the lovers' willingness to let each other be. They take one another for better or worse, knowing that their losers' marriage of convenience can't go anywhere, and understanding, as profoundly damaged people do, that it doesn't have to—that even a few weeks of tenderness and fun and unconditional respect are a blessing, a gift that only a fool would reject as too small.

Watching "Leaving Las Vegas," you begin to see the world as Ben and Sera do. Initially, the movie's style seems jagged and disorienting, a chaos of bleary impressions and vertiginous mood swings. But it doesn't take long to adjust to its speed and apparent recklessness, because the swift, dissociated pleasures that Figgis and Cage provide are unusually keen. The pre-credit sequence, a headlong spill of scenes from Ben's last days in L.A., supplies an eye-opening jolt of Cage's acting genius. In quick succession, we see Ben bopping cheerfully through a liquor store and tossing bottles into an overflowing cart; gamely trying, and morosely failing, to charm a pretty stranger into bed; blurting out "I'm sorry" in a shocking, abject sob when his boss removes him from his job; shaking uncontrollably at a bank teller's window and then, after retreating to a bar for a few pick-me-ups, returning to endorse a check with a hand that is now, he announces triumphantly, "steady as a *fucking* rock." In each of these almost unbearably vivid, intense moments, Cage seems to be capturing a different aspect of the character's fearsomely undirected vitality, of the muddled will that gives this drunk both the strength to die and the perverse ability to enjoy what's killing him. Amazingly, Cage sustains the improbable mixture of despair and insouciance throughout the picture, savoring its strange taste right down to the bottom of the glass. And he never violates the dignity of Ben's precarious, in-the-moment existence by imbuing it with either sad-sack pathos or anti-hero cool. The character's integrity is both deeply funny and absurdly tragic, and Cage's great performance dissolves our sense of the difference.

Elisabeth Shue's tough, subtle acting complements Cage's superbly. It's a joy to see two performers responding so delicately and so surely to each other's minutest shifts of tone and expression. With anything less than this sort of miraculous rapport between the actors, the characters' romance might have seemed not merely unlikely but impossible. (Or, worse, Ben and Sera might have become one of those self-consciously literary lower-depths couples that Charles Bukowski specializes in—standard-bearers for the superior values of the bohemian life.) By the end of "Leaving Las Vegas," Figgis and his remarkable stars have made every previous movie about boozers look thin and naïve. Acknowledging the essential stasis of alcoholism frees the filmmakers from the temptation to impose on the subject a traditional exposition-conflict-resolution narrative structure. (Compared with this film, "The Lost Weekend" and "Days of Wine and Roses" feel like desperate, elaborate evasions—movies in denial.) The experience that is captured here is so fresh and so immediate that the security of ordinary storytelling seems, finally, beside the point, useless. In "Leaving Las Vegas," time slows to a stop, and the stilled world suddenly looks alive with revelations. The movie is terribly, crushingly sad, but its honesty is invigorating: it names its poison and downs it, neat. ◆

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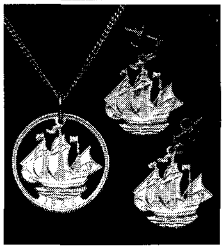

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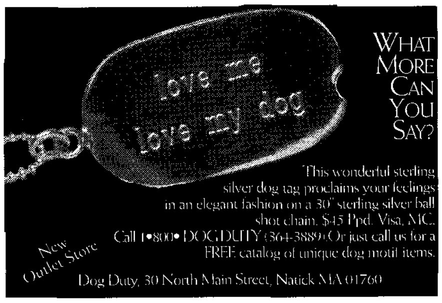

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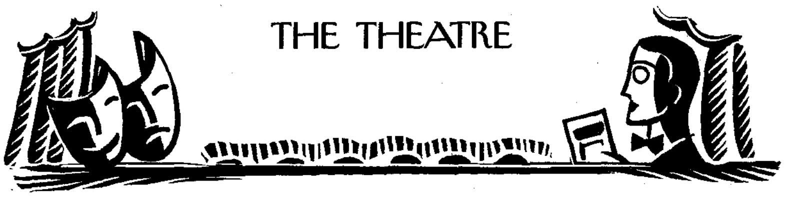
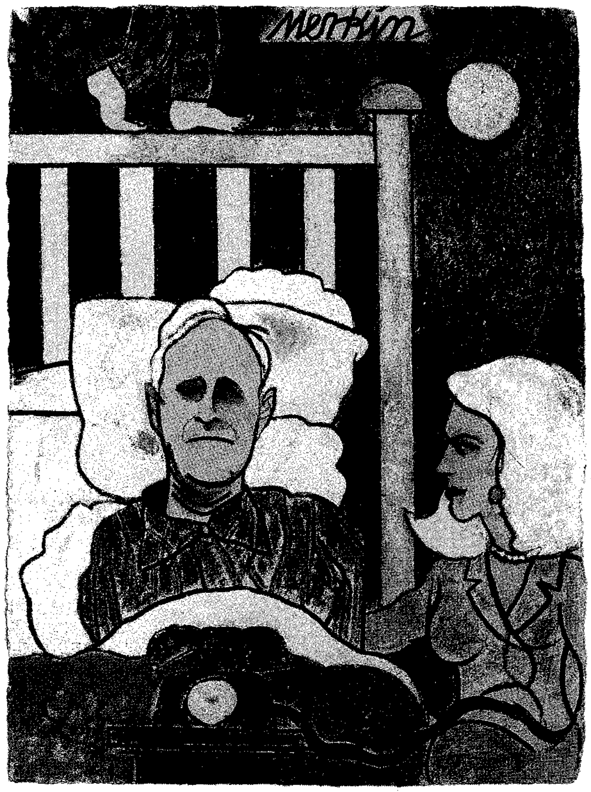


LIFE AFTER DEATH

Karel Reisz's production of "Moonlight" shines on Broadway.

BY JOHN LAHR

HAROLD PINTER'S plays ask an audience to submit to the unknown. They are exercises in ambiguity whose drama is the tension of not knowing. Over the decades, Pinter's scrupulous mining of his unconscious has produced a fierce, funny, and controversial œuvre that is one of the high-water marks of modern drama. In calling attention to the mysteries of the heart, Pinter's plays resist interpretation and yet demand it. "Moonlight," which was originally produced in London in 1993, was Pinter's first full-length play since "Betrayal," in 1978, and it was both a major work and a departure. Inevitably, it has taken theatre practitioners some time to absorb the change in style and content. For its Broadway début, at the Roundabout's Laura Pels Theatre, Pinter has turned the play over to the film director Karel Reisz, who has given "Moonlight" a gorgeous production. (Reisz is a friend of mine, but, this notwithstanding, his version seems to me finer in almost every scenic detail than the London version.) By bringing the lights up on Tony Walton's beautiful crepuscular backdrop—a shadowy, moon-ridden setting in which two rows of lugubrious poplars recede to a glowering oyster-gray horizon—Reisz immediately imposes an eerie immanence on Pinter's tone poem. The atmosphere of anxiety—fretful, merciless, still—is perfectly calibrated to the play's sense of dread. It is a landscape of silence, and the characters who inhabit it are solitary: each sealed in discomfort, seeing and not seeing, remembering and misremembering, hearing and going unheard. Downstage right, Andy (Jason Robards) lies at home, dying, with his wife, Bel (Blythe Danner), in attendance; across the stage, their sons, Fred (Barry McEvoy) and Jake (Liev Schreiber), occupy a dingy room and refuse to come to Andy's bedside. Moving back and forth across this family divide is a complex echo of regret and recrimination. This sound is Pinter's music. "What are they now!" Andy bleats at one point, demonstrating the verbal meltdown that has driven his sons into retreat. "A sponging parasitical pair of ponces. Sucking the tit of the state. Sucking the tit of the state!"



Mockery, and a grief beyond words: Jason Robards and Blythe Danner in Harold Pinter's "Moonlight."

RICHARD MERKIN

In "Moonlight" 's litany of loss, the first note is sounded, rightly, by the ghost

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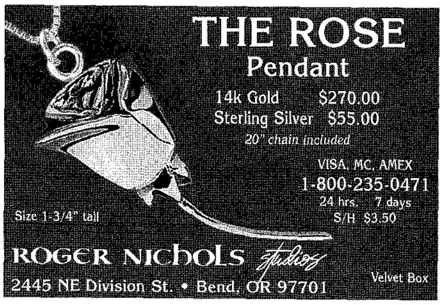

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of Andy's sixteen-year-old daughter, Bridget (Melissa Chalsma), who enters to the tremulous accompaniment of Janáček's first string quartet. The music is Reisz's addition, and it effectively establishes a sense of Bridget's emotional agitation and otherness. Bridget moves barefoot across a platform that bridges her brothers' and her parents' worlds, and she looks down at Andy and Bel with an adolescent's idealizing, omnipotent, innocent eyes. "They're so tired," she says, in a sweet voice, which Reisz has miked to emphasize its dreamlike differentness. "They have given so much of their life for me and for my brothers. They need to sleep in peace and wake up rested." A ghost is trapped energy; but as the anger, deferred dreams, betrayals, and abdications of the other characters emerge through Pinter's oblique dialogue the audience realizes that the living, too, have a trapped, ghostly aspect. They are not dead, but they have murdered a part of their hearts. "Moonlight" plays with these emotional intensities and paradoxes and, like an abstract painting, arranges them into a powerful nonlinear pattern to ambush a grief beyond words.

Andy's first words address absence. "Where are the boys?" he asks. Robards turns his spaniel eyes to Danner, who sits beside the bed doing her needlepoint. With a shock of white hair flopping over his beetle brow, and a reedy clarinet of a voice, which swoops over Pinter's jokes and gibes with distinctive bittersweetness, Robards adds a sense of the avuncular to the acrimonious. Bel mischievously reminds Andy that he's a hectoring blowhard. "Yes, it's quite true that all your life in all your personal and social attachments the language you employed was mainly coarse, crude, vacuous, puerile, obscene, and brutal to a degree," she says quietly. Mockery is Andy's medium and his message. Almost as soon as the curtain goes up, he's spelling it out for Bel, after she puzzles over one of his typical scurrilities, "taking the piss." "It means mockery!" he roars. "It means to mock. It means mockery! Mockery! Mockery!" As we quickly see, mockery is a game that everyone in Andy's family has learned to play, and play well. For them, it serves as a psychological lubricant that shifts the blocked, heavy, personal stuff that lumbers them and causes so much friction. Mockery is an antidote to emptiness—a kind of mouth-to-mouth resuscitation that breathes momentary life back into languishing spirits. "How I loved you," Andy says to Bel a few beats later. "What a wonderful woman you were." The edgy, shifting badinage puts us squarely in the ambivalent emotional turmoil of Pinter's world, where feeling is too fierce and contradictory to be expressed directly. Mockery, at once an act of revenge and an act of courage, lightens the doom of each character's resignation with the illusion of control. In his wretchedness, Andy uses the annihilating sound of his bombast to obtain a sense of power. He rages at his boys: "They were bastards. Both of them. Always." He goes on to recount the legend of his own faithlessness. "Think of the wonder of it," he says, remembering Maria (Kathleen Widdoes), with whom he had an affair, and who had also been Bel's lover. "I betrayed you with your own girlfriend, she betrayed you with your husband and she betrayed her own husband—and me—with you! She broke every record in sight! She was a genius and a great fuck!" Are these sins and seductions real or imagined? Probably they're an ambiguous mixture of both. "The past is a mist," Andy says. He goes on:

> ANDY: Once . . . I remember this . . . once . . . a woman walked towards me across a darkening room. (*Pause*)
> BEL: That was me. (*Pause*)
> ANDY: You?

The question is both a taunt and a regret. Bel takes revenge immediately afterward. Andy suggests that Bel "had" Maria in their bedroom.

> BEL: I don't "have" people.
> ANDY: You've had me.
> BEL: Oh you. Oh yes. I can still have you.

Danner makes the line pay off with a dismissive roll of her almond eyes; and it's through those superbly expressive eyes—which shine when the couple's friends Ralph (Paul Hecht) and Maria briefly materialize, and dim when Andy confesses his love for Bel—that Danner conveys the silent drama of Bel's tortured soul. Reisz extracts from Robards and Danner a subtle humanity, excavating the suffering beneath their sarcasm. He has eliminated the mannered pauses and postures that have become associated with Pinter's performing style. In their place he has devised a kind of naturalism that lends to the postures and put-downs the easiness of a long life lived together. This habit of being is dramatized in a brief and astonishing scene in which Andy steps outside into the moonlit night to take a furtive slug of whiskey. As he stands there alone, bottle in hand, his dead daughter silently appears. "Ah darling," he says. "Ah my darling." Pinter's simple, elegiac mantra of mourning cuts to the heart of unrepairable anguish: a never-ending ache of regret for the loss of the beloved and of the promise of solace. From the other side of the stage, Bel walks into the moonlight. Her body is turned upstage, and we see her face only in profile. Almost imperceptibly, she shakes her head, as if to tell Andy "Don't." They stand silent for a moment, bound together, if not by love then by devastation. They exit without a word.

REISZ'S production is much funnier than the London version. This is mainly because of his success in exploiting the manic defensiveness of Fred and Jake, who erect an impenetrable jokey wall of put-ons in order to remain detached from their unbearable feelings about their father. Andy, who was a respected civil servant ("I was an envied and feared force in the temples of the just," he says), wins no points with them for his vaunted success, money, power, and reputation. "Applause came not his way. Nor did he seek it," Jake says, in one hilarious riff. "Gratitude came not his way. Nor did he seek it. Masturbation came not his way. Nor did he seek it. I'm sorry—I meant approbation came not his way." Here, at the beginning of a big career, Liev Schreiber jump-starts the comedy by giving Jake a droll, ironic authority that plays well against Barry McEvoy's aura of entropy. "Cheerful though gloomy" is how the dishevelled Fred aptly describes himself. Together, the brothers repel the sorrow and the savagery of their father's denunciations with a series of music-hall routines. At one point, just before they offer a toast to Andy, Jake says, "I shall love him and be happy to pay the full price of that love." Fred counters, "Which is the price of death." As Jake says, a few lines later, this law of family relations is "both tautologous and contradictory." The play rests on this awful paradox: in the war of independence between father and son, death is both a gift and a goal. When Bel calls the sons to tell them that their father is dying—another complex moment beautifully managed by Danner—Fred and Jake hand the phone back and forth, pretending that she has called a Chinese laundry. "It doesn't matter," she says, in a heartbroken whisper. In her desperation, Bel finally decides to break the impasse. She enters into their fantasy. "Do you do dry cleaning?" she asks, and puts down the phone. Caught off guard, Jake stalks around the room, pushing feeling away with his ferocity: "Of course we do dry cleaning! Of course we do dry cleaning! What kind of fucking laundry are you if you don't do dry cleaning?"

The play ends, as it began, with Bridget's ghostly presence. She tells us a story of being asked by her parents to come to a party at which they would be present. "But you'll have to come by yourself, alone," she recalls their saying. "You won't have to dress up. You just have to wait until the moon is down." As she talks, she moves toward Bel, who stands over her dead husband; then she backs away to center stage. "When I got to the house, it was bathed in moonlight," she says. "The house, the glade, the lane, were all bathed in moonlight. But the inside of the house was dark and all the windows were dark. There was no sound." Here, after painting a word picture of deadness, Bridget turns, palms open, in the emptiness. The spinning is Reisz's touch; but it seems right for the play's chilling, unmoored sense of disconnection. "I stood there in the moonlight and waited for the moon to go down," Bridget says, as the lights fade to black. ♦

CONSTABULARY NOTES FROM ALL OVER

[*From the Ruidoso* (*N.M.*) *News*]

10:45 p.m. A man in Carrizozo reported livestock on U.S. 380 about a half mile west of town across from "Gracey's old place." A deputy was dispatched. He reported a big bull on the road and that he is trying to find a brand. He will try to put the bull back in the Gracey pasture, but may have to take down some fence. The deputy reported that the bull is bigger than he is. He will try to get it to go through a hole, but he won't get in its way. The bull decided to cross the highway toward the lava field. Maybe he knows where he's going, the deputy said. He followed the bull. It jumped the fence and went back into Gracey's pasture. The deputy thinks he's O.K. for the evening, but will contact people in nearby trailer to let them know. They told the deputy the name of the person caring for the livestock and that person will check the fence in the morning.

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FASHION PORTFOLIO CREDITS

PAGES 130-31: Bustier and skirt, Jean Paul Gaultier. Suit and scarves, Romeo Gigli; boots, Paul Smith; fedora, Dolce & Gabbana; shirt, Early Halloween.

PAGE 132: Blazer and pant, Richard Tyler; shirt and collar pin, Matsuda; shoe, J. M. Weston. Dress, veil, and pumps, Chanel Couture; hose, Fogal.

PAGE 133: Shirt, Richard Tyler; jacket, Donna Karan. Hat, Stephen Jones for John Galliano; sleeve, Helmut Lang.

PAGE 134: Dress with slip, Comme des Garçons; head wrap, Martin Margiela. Suit, tie, and shirt, Gucci; boot, Paul Smith; cufflink, Romeo Gigli.

PAGE 135: Dress, Issey Miyake; sandals, Bernard Figueroa. Sweater, Romeo Gigli; pants, Banana Republic; loafers, Hush Puppies.

PAGE 136: Smock, vest, and pants, Early Halloween; boot, Lawler Duffy; scarf, Yohji Yamamoto. Dress, jacket, stockings, and shoes, Comme des Garçons.

PAGE 137: Coat, belt, helmet, and gloves, Jean Paul Gaultier. Hat, Dolce & Gabbana; coat, Early Halloween; sweater, Jean Paul Gaultier; pants, Jean Colonna.

PAGES 138-39: Dress, Hussein Chalayan. Hat, Dolce & Gabbana; sweater, Jean Paul Gaultier; pants, Banana Republic; boots, J. M. Weston. Love seat, Buzz Scrap Metal, East Hampton.

PAGE 140: Turtleneck, dress, and shoes, Yohji Yamamoto.

PAGE 141: Hat, Claudia Rapisarda for John Bartlett; goggles, Early Halloween; robe and pants, Comme des Garçons; shirt, Jean Paul Gaultier; boots, Joop! Dress, John Galliano; socks, Comme des Garçons; sandals, Manolo Blahnik.

PAGE 142: Jacket, Issey Miyake; shirt, Joop!; pants, Romeo Gigli. Dress and jacket, Christian Lacroix. Baby blouse, John Galliano.

PAGE 143: Jacket and skirt, John Galliano; hat, Stephen Jones for John Galliano; shoes, Manolo Blahnik for John Galliano.

PAGE 144: Dress, jacket, pants, and shoes, Rei Kawakubo for Comme des Garçons.

PAGE 145: Pajama pants, Comme des Garçons; shirt and moccasins, Early Halloween; scarf, Meg Cohen. Dress and loafers, Comme des Garçons. American flag, Betsy Ross.

PAGES 146-47: Pajamas, Masha Calloway; moccasins, Early Halloween. Dress, Romeo Gigli; shoes, Michel Perry.

PAGE 148: Dress, Alexander McQueen.

PAGE 149: Dress, Geoffrey Beene. Suit and sweater, Jean Paul Gaultier.

PAGE 150: Vest and pants, Comme des Garçons.

PAGE 151: Armor, dress, and gloves, Jean Paul Gaultier; hose, Fogal; shoes, Robert Clergerie. Coat, sweater, and hat, Comme des Garçons; trousers, Romeo Gigli; scarf, Meg Cohen; slippers, Early Halloween.

PAGE 152: Sheath, Atelier Versace.

PAGE 153: Coat, Yohji Yamamoto; shirt, Helmut Lang; glove, Early Halloween. Coat, Issey Miyake; shirt, Giorgio Armani; ascot, Romeo Gigli.

PAGES 154-55: Jacket, pants, and vest, Romeo Gigli; shirt, Early Halloween. Corset, Hussein Chalayan; skirt, Romeo Gigli; hose, Danskin; boots, Issey Miyake.

PAGE 183: Gown, Thierry Mugler. Suit, Donna Karan; shirt, neck pin, cufflinks, and ascot, Romeo Gigli; hat, Yohji Yamamoto; shoes, J. M. Weston.

CAST AND CREW

NADJA AUERMANN as Mrs. Comfort and **A PERSON UNKNOWN** as Mr. Comfort, created in collaboration with **DOON ARBUS** and **POLLY MELLEN**, fashion editor. **JULIEN D'YS**, hair stylist; **LINDA CANTELLO**, makeup artist; **MARLA WEINHOFF**, scenic designer; **RUEDI HOFMANN**, technical director; **KARA GLYNN**, production manager; **RUTH ANSEL**, graphic designer. Assistants: Masha Calloway, John Hullum (fashion); Sebastien Richard (hair); Alexa Davis, Julian La Verdiere, Vincent Mazeau, Brian Tolle (scenic design); Eric Rasmussen, Marc McClish, Carl Horner, Grant Delin, Edward Johann (technical).

SHOUTS & MURMURS

TO RUN OR NOT TO RUN

BY CHRISTOPHER BUCKLEY

PROS

Slogan: "Powell to the People!"

The look on Bob Dole's face when I ask him if he wants to be my Vice-President.

"My American Journey, Part II." (Ask for twelve million dollars this time.)

Someone to carry garment bag.

Get to ask Pat Buchanan during debate how many tours *he* served in Vietnam.

Bigger government pension.

Get to use pointers again. (Call Sharper Image, order cool laser pointer.)

The look on Jesse's face.

Get to watch Barbra Streisand campaign for a Republican.

More newspaper stories about being related to Princess Di.

Issuing executive order cancelling Sam Donaldson's mohair-ranch subsidies.

The look on Al D'Amato's face.

No more getting pulled over at random by Alabama state troopers.

Movie version of "My American Journey"—Denzel? Blair Whatsisname from "L.A. Law"? Harry Belafonte?

Mess with Navy's head: tell them I'm going to scrap aircraft carriers, turn them into tanks.

Bigger helicopters.

Have Queen of England over to my house. Give *her* medal.

More saluting.

CONS

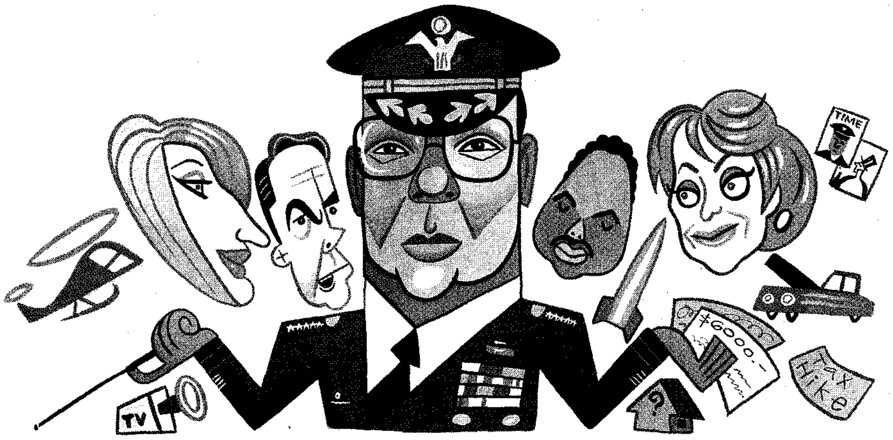
The look on Alma's face.

No more sixty-thousand-dollar speeches.

Barbara Walters asking me how often Alma and I do it.

Yadda yadda about my name on order transferring four thousand anti-tank missiles from Army to C.I.A. to give to Iranians in return for hostages. (Blame Gipper.)

Deciding who are the good guys in Bosnia.



"Why didn't you nail Saddam when you had the chance?" yadda yadda.

No time to tinker with '68 Volvo.

Sucking up to Ralph Reed.

Being called a "Blackefeller Republican" by Buchanan.

Need to explain Somalia screwup. (Blame Aspin.)

What, My Lai?

Higher taxes. (Check if Prez has to pay local D.C. taxes.)

Jesse saying he paved my way. (Oy vay.)

Safire calling me a pantywaist for retracting comment in *New Yorker* about Nigerians being low-life con artists.

Cousin Bruce Llewellyn telling reporters I don't scare white people enough.

Need to have opinion on housing starts.

Schwarzkopf interviews comparing me to General McClellan. (Offer him big preëmptive ambassadorship.)

Learning to pronounce "Kweisi Mfume."

No more being called "demigod" by *Time*.

Bob Woodward finding out replacement fender for '68 Volvo was hot. ♦

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Sarah knows a lot about diabetes. She knows because S she has it. But she doesn't know that Eli Lilly and Company developed the medicine she takes every day. Or that we keep her doctor up-to-date about the findings of health care professionals all over the world a who treat kids just like her. Why should she? She's busy just being a seven-year-old. If the last 119 years have taught us anything, it is simply this: knowledge is powerful medicine. So, while we continue our search r for innovative medicines, Lilly is also pioneering ways to use information technology to improve health care. We're collecting, analyzing, and sharing information with thousands of health care providers a and patients. And we're leading the search for better, more affordable treatments, preventions, and cures—so people can live healthier, more active lives. Meanwhile, for Sarah, Lilly may be only the name h on her medicine...and that's just fine with us.

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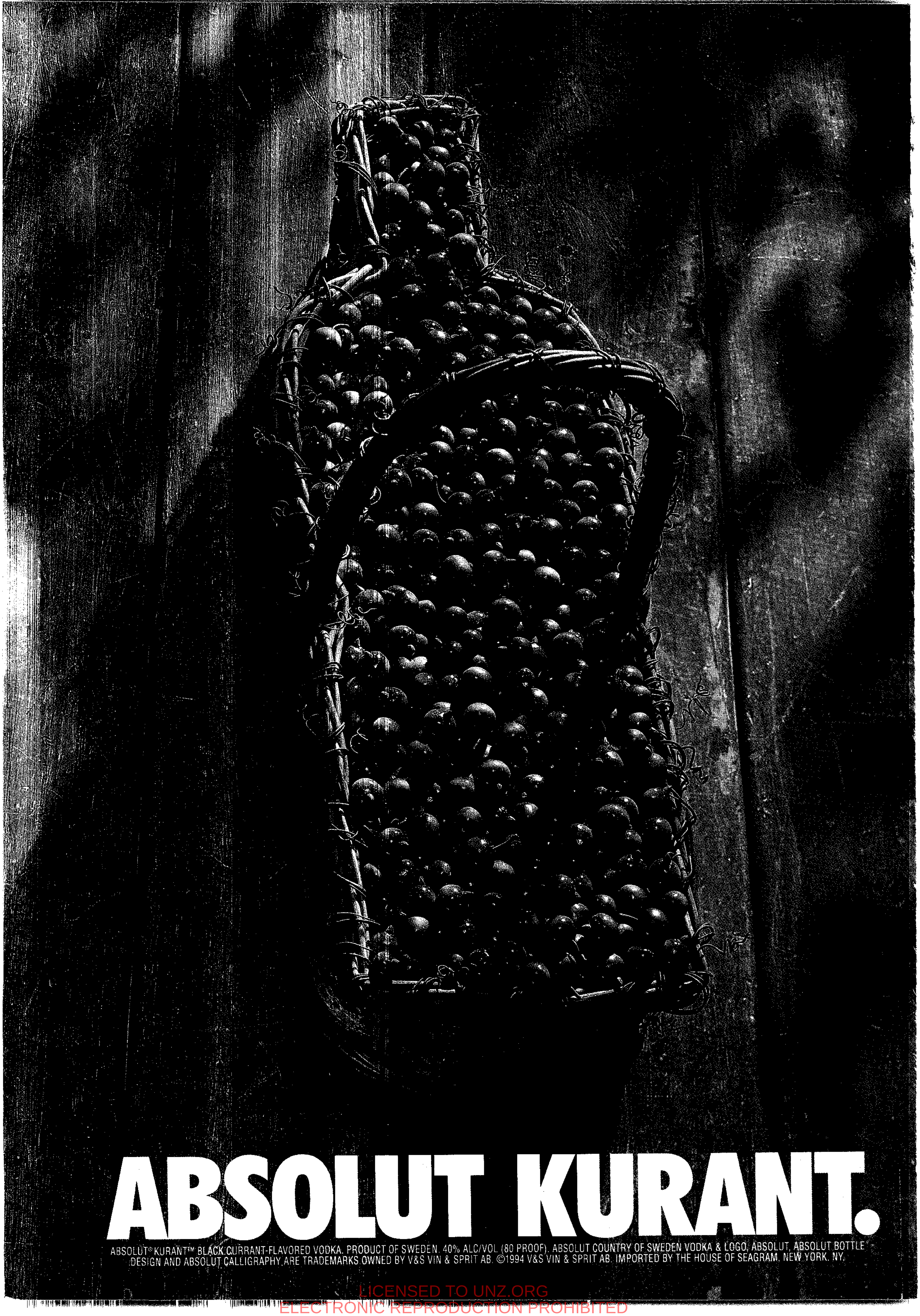

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